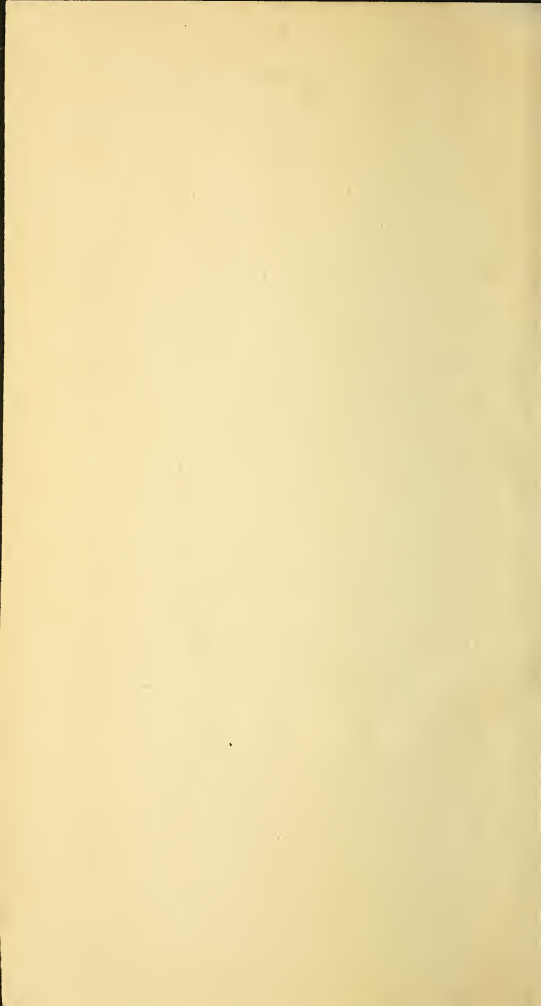


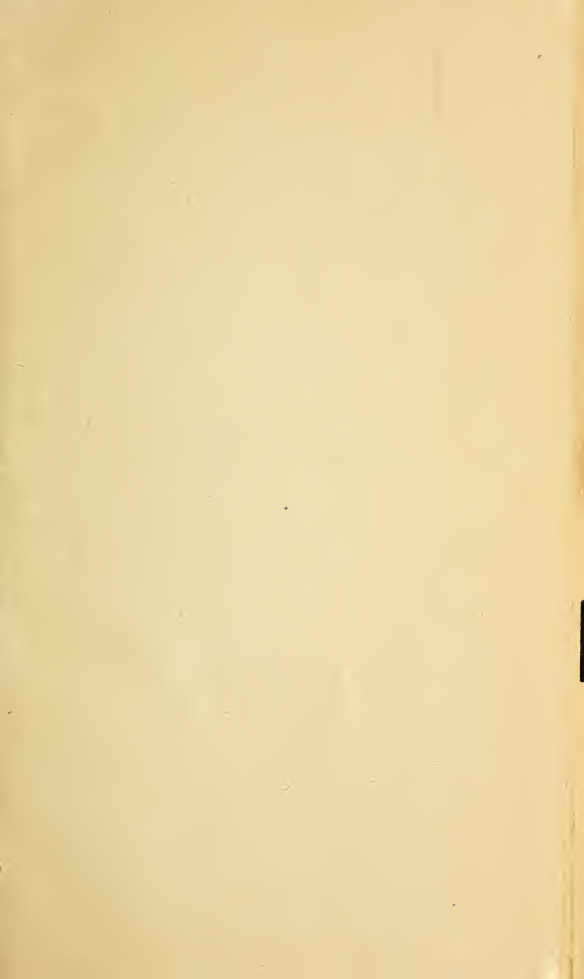




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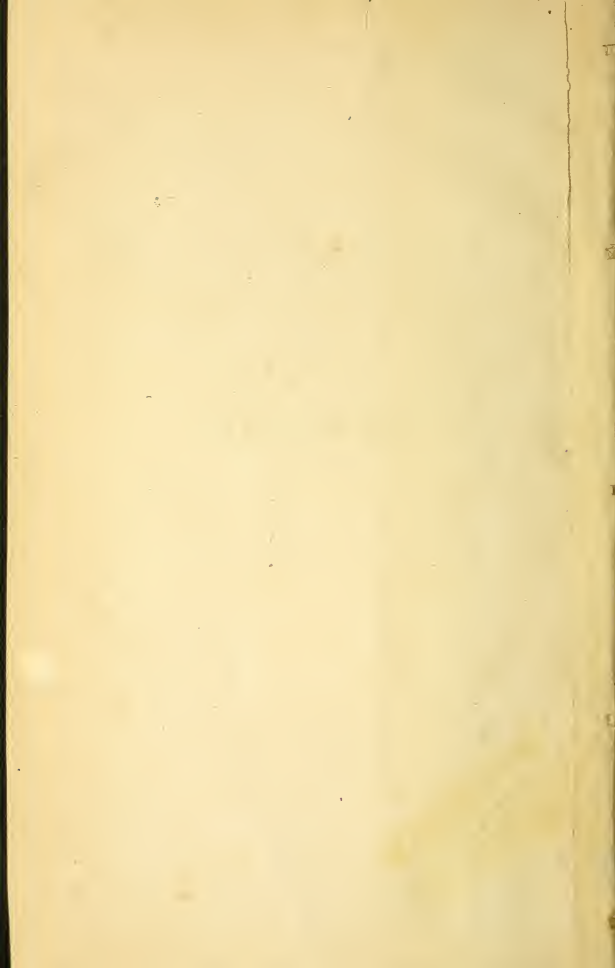






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INFERNO.



*Myself I would have
from the Translator*

INFERNO:

A TRANSLATION

FROM

✓
DANTE ALIGHIERI,

INTO

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.

BY

JOSEPH HUME, ESQ.

LONDON:

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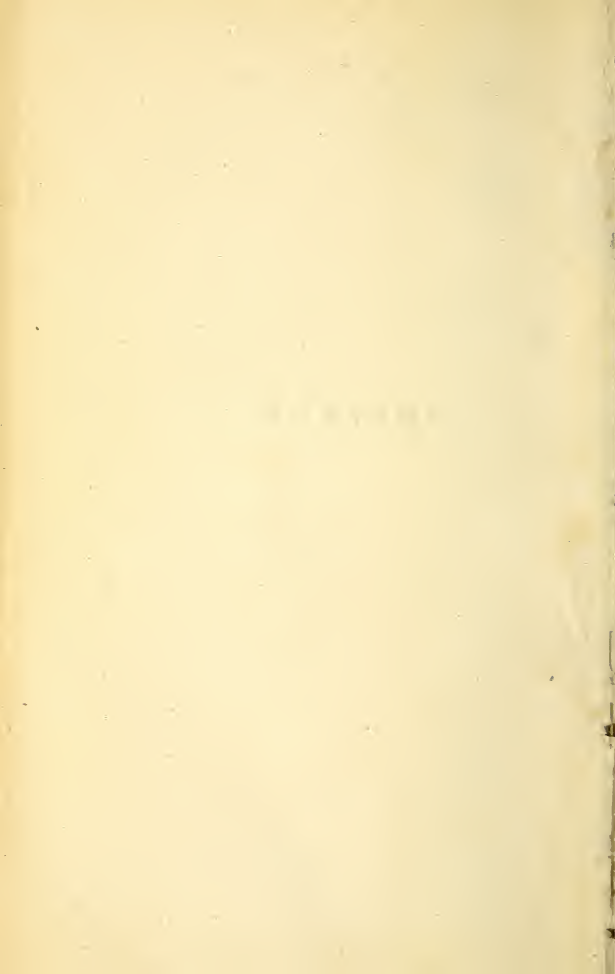
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INFERNO.



I N F E R N O.

C A N T O I.

C O N T E N T S.

The POET, in a mystical way, gets entangled in a pathless wood.
Is resisted by wild beasts.—Meets with VIRGIL, who becomes his
GUIDE.

It chanc'd, in life's mid stage,* that, straying far,
A wood, wild and obscure, such horrors spread
Upon my errant steps as e'en to tell,
A dread renews, scarce greater due to death.
But I will all—the dire event there seen,
And the great good commingled, fully shew.

* DANTE was then about thirty-five years old.

In such dull slumber had my wand'ring toil
 Swath'd ev'ry sense, that mem'ry never knew
 How I got tangled in this rugged scene.

A mountain's base bounded the vale that had
 My heart with horrors overwhelm'd. Thence I
 Beheld its lofty head by the bright sun,
 That universal guide correct, illum'd:
 Its well-known beams, after this night of woe
 And weariness, my stricken spirit cheer'd.
 As he, who wreck escapes and treads breathless
 The shore, his danger distanc'd, turns gazing
 At the terrific sea: so I, my mind
 Still quaking, look'd on the dread valley pass'd,
 Pass'd yet by none that had surviv'd the toil.

My wearied frame now sooth'd by light repose,
 The desert steep I trac'd. A steep that at
 Each step my dragging limb sustain'd a weight

Unwonted. When, lo! a panther* nimbly,
 Its hide bright spotted, bounded before me.
 He seem'd, dauntless, my course to stop, that I
 Was urg'd my labor'd progress to retrace.
 It was the primé of morn : and the sun glow'd
 In Aries whence it roll'd, when the Most High,
 Thro' love divine, harmonic motion first
 To his creation gave. Thus to my hope
 Was joyous all around :—the beaming dawn ;
 The season choice ; and the skin gay of the
 Light-footed animal precursing me.
 Short was my joy. My horrors were renew'd.
 A lion came. To me it ran ; and seem'd
 With head high rais'd, rav'ning for instant food—
 The very wind, as in alarm, was still.

* The panther, lion, and wolf, are emblems of sensuality, ambition, and avarice.

The POET is supposed to have aimed at an allegory, which was to refer to his own conduct. But it would be difficult to prove its correctness: and if proved neither the poem nor the reader would probably receive much benefit.

Then, next a wolf, lean, craving, that has oft,
 To many a land, by her fierce ravages,
 Wrought misery. Appall'd, without a hope
 The height to reach, I stood as one who o'er
 His gains joying sees them in an instant
 Scatter'd : for now the beast, all rage, downward
 Kept chasing me to where the sun-beams rest.
 Whilst falling in this dark and deep abyss,
 A being caught my sight. Feeble, as by
 Disease, his voice. To him, now inmate more
 Express of this wild chasm, I thus exclaim'd :
 " Be ye a spirit or a breathing soul,
 " Have mercy on me !" Then spake he : " Not now,
 " I once was man ; of Lombardy ; Mantua
 " Gave me parents ; I under Julius born
 " In his less potent days ; at Rome my life
 " The mild Augustus bless'd, when none but false
 " And deities of human mould were fear'd ;
 " And I that bard who sang *ÆNEAS* just
 " From Troy the proud when flaming driv'n.—But thou

“ Why onward to such misery ? Why not

“ Ascend that mount delightful, chief and of

“ Ev’ry bliss the source ?”

I, profoundly aw’d,

Thus spake : “ Art thou then VIRGIL from whose fount

“ So fine a stream of eloquence was pour’d ?

“ Thou, by all poets reverenc’d, and their light

“ With how deep study, with what ardent zest

“ Thy pages I perus’d ! My master thou ;

“ Thou mad’st me what I am : my style renown’d

“ From thine I cull’d. That beast, ILLUSTRIOUS BARD,

“ Look at it, and save me. From her I fled ;

“ Thro’ her I tremble thus.” My falling tears

He saw, and thus replied : “ Another road

“ Must save thee from this scene. This road, her own,

“ She never yet permitted one to pass.

“ Blockade impenetrable she as death ;

“ By nature wicked ; and so ravenous

“ That she, tho’ gorging ever, ever craves.

" Many an animal her thralldom vile
 " Have felt, and still will many more, until
 " That greyhound * come and give it painful death.
 " He who nor lands nor gold regards : but chief
 " Wisdom and friendship and all virtue loves.
 " Between the Feltros † is his native town :
 " And he, to humble Italy, (for which
 " Camilla bled, Turnus, Euryalus,
 " And Nisus his firm friend,) a bulwark shall
 " Become. This beast, whom envy loosen'd from
 " Hell's caverns on mankind, shall he throughout
 " Each city chase until in Hell refix'd."

" Pond'ring thy good, I urge that thro' a space
 " Eternal, I thy guide, thou visit'st—where

* Intended as a panegyric on Cangrande della Scalla, his Veronese patron.

For the notes that are purely historical, the translator is indebted to his elder laborers in this vineyard.

† Verona is between a city in the Morea Trivigiania, called Feltro, and Monte Feltro, a city in Urbino.

" Thou shalt hear sinners despairing, shriek, and
 " Shalt behold spirits from ancient days so
 " Tortur'd, that they all crave for death again.
 " Next shalt thou view the shades that purge in fire,
 " Suff'ring contented in the hope that they,
 " In their appointed time, shall be, in Heav'n,
 " United with the blest. Shouldst thou this region
 " Wish to visit, no longer I thy guide.
 " One * worthier far than I must lead thee there.
 " For HE who reigns above, ruling the hosts
 " Of Heav'n with the vast universe, and sits
 " Supreme in the grand citadel of Heav'n
 " High thron'd, has, by his law eternal,
 " Doom'd me rebel ; and that none by me
 " Shall enter the bright regions of the blest.
 " O, happy they elected to the task ! "

Then I to him. " BARD, I beseech thee by

* BEATRICE, the poet's mistress, his conductor in the Paradiso.

That great God thou knewest not, (so may I
Shun such evils, or, perchance, worse,) lead me
To view ST. PETER'S GATE,* and those confin'd
In HELL!—Onward he mov'd : I follow'd him.

* St. Peter's gate. The gate of PURGATORY : fabled to be guarded by an angel placed there by St. Peter.

CANTO II.

CONTENTS.

VIRGIL states the causes that sent him to **DANTE's** aid.—Leads him to the gate of **HELL**.

DAY now declin'd; and **Eve's** brown shadows brought
Regaling respite to the lab'ring world.

But not to me that boon: for heavy toil

My awful journey claims, and throes of soul

Commiserating those to torments doom'd.

These to record, my faithful muse, be thine!

Me then with memory and genius aid,

So shall I celebrate thy pow'rs immense!

“**FAM'D POET**, now my guide ere I attempt

“**Th' infernal tract**—try, try me lest I fail.

“**Him** have you sung, whose worth so won the gods

" As, living, to allow (distinguish'd grant)
 " Th' infernal shades to view. *ÆNEAS* he.
 " The Great Almighty foe to ill in his
 " Vast mind, teeming futurity, the blest
 " Effects foresaw, and, therefore, courteous, him
 " The boon granted :—for doom'd was he in Heav'n
 " The mighty founder of Imperial Rome,
 " Rome the blest seat of Peter's sacred pow'r!
 " To that dread visit (so your song declares)
 " He owes his victories that gave to Rome
 " The papal sway. The chosen vessel * there,
 " To bring back comfort and the faith that to
 " Salvation solely leads, sojourn'd awhile.
 " But why should I there venture? Who for me
 " The journey has ordain'd? For I am not
 " *ÆNEAS*, no, nor *PAUL*. Unworthy I
 " Thyself and all must judge. Should I attempt,
 " My folly the result will testify.

* The chosen vessel. *ST. PAUL*.

“ Your wisdom knows my reas’nings feebly told.”

As he, by new-rai’d thoughts his former will

Discards, and ev’ry purpose changes, so

I, in this dark coast, allow’d reflection

To consume vigor for that enterprise.

To this the SHADE of noble soul replies :

“ Those words, rightly interpreted, disclose

“ A soul of cowardice, which oft checks man

“ That he, like one who by erroneous sight

“ Out of a shadow will a monster form,

“ From the most worthy enterprise recedes.

“ To rid thee of thy fears, learn why I came ;

“ With what instructions charg’d when first thy state

“ Of danger rais’d my pity.—I was then

“ Where shades dwell ever in suspense ;* mid spot

“ Between the blest and damn’d. A virgin † call’d

* Shades in suspense. LIMBO ; a state neither of glory nor of punishment.

† DONNA. DIVINE MERCY.

“ Me ; beauteous she and blest : that her commands

“ I even crav’d. Bright, as the sun, her eyes

“ When, with a voice angelic and in tones

“ Of soft and suasive melody, she spoke.

“ Oh ! Mantua’s courteous shade, whose fame still lives,

“ And ever will, till motion be no more,

“ I have a friend, no casual friend, who in

“ The desert strand finds such impediment

“ As, scaring, drives him back. By tidings heard

“ In Heav’n I fear lest he has wander’d past

“ All help, and I in vain to save him strive.

“ Speed thee ; try all thine eloquence ; and with

“ What else may to his safety lead, assist

“ Him. This to me were consolation sweet,

“ For I am BEATRICE.* To urge thee on

“ A place I quitted (joy’d would I return !)

“ Of bliss. Love sent me ; prompted these my words :

* BEATRICE, noticed in page 9.

“ And when again before my lord I stand

“ Thou shalt be prais’d.” She ceas’d. Then I :

“ O ! maiden, by whose sole influence man

“ Excels all of existence known beneath

“ The skies, this least of spheres, so precious thy

“ Commands, that now obey’d would seem obey’d

“ Too tardily. No farther therefore needs

“ Thy will be press’d.—But deign to say, “ Why from

“ Thine ample Heav’n, so earnest to return,

“ Thou hast descended thus to our centre ?”

This her reply : “ In thy research since so

“ Profound, learn briefly, how, here fearless I.

“ Alone should fear proceed from pow’r to do

“ Another harm : nought else is terrible.

“ And for myself so fram’d am I (to God

“ Be praise for it) as to be arm’d against

“ Thy miseries, against those furious flames.

" In Heav'n there is a maiden * gentle, who
 " So mourns that hindrance thou must remedy
 " As e'en to make the judgment seat
 " Above, bend to her. This maiden spake to
 " Julia thus for thy sake: " Him, I beseech
 " Thee, aid: thy faithful servant he: I, him
 " Commend to thee." Julia,† of cruelty
 " The foe, that instant lighted to the place
 " Where I, with ancient Rachael seated, dwelt,
 " And these addressed to me——O! BEATRICE,
 " A favorite of God, why dost thou not
 " Help him who so lov'd thee, and for thee left
 " The vulgar herd? Dost thou not hear his moans
 " So piteous! Nor seest thou death that as a
 " Torrent, than the sea more terrible,
 " Is now assailing him? Ne'er with more speed
 " To profit or from ruin hasten'd man

* LUCIA. The enlightening Grace of Heaven.

† JULIA. DIVINE MERCY.

"Than I, at this address, hasten'd from my
 "Divine abode to thee. I now confide
 "To thine embellish'd eloquence, highly
 "That honors thee and all thy list'ning throng."

Our converse closing, she, her brilliant eyes,
 More brilliant through the rising tear, aside
 Turn'd from me. This, speed added to my way.
 Here, as she wish'd, I came. From the fell beast,
 That up the beauteous mount thy path oppos'd,
 I did deliver thee. Then, whence is this?
 Why, why aghast? Whence have such horrors seiz'd
 Upon thy soul?—Ardor and courage gone?
 Tho' three bless'd virgins,* e'en from Heav'n's high court,
 Protect thee; and I, boding thee all good?

As flow'rs that droop and close at chilling eve,
 Rise, glist'ning on strong stems, unbosom'd, to

* Three Virgins. DIVINE MERCY, LUCIA, and BEATRICE.

My tremor visible, my MASTER thus :

“ Suspicious hence, and fear. The promis’d place

“ Behold. Here dwell the lamentable tribes

“ Who by neglect no good from talents drew.”

He then with kindness and comfort me

Regal’d ; and my hand seizing, shew’d me things

By man yet unconceiv’d, so horrible !

Sighs and loud moans, and cries and howlings wild

Now bursting on me thro’ the rayless air,

Drew uncheck’d tears of pity down my cheeks.

Then screams and taunts, accents of wrath and rage

From tongues innum’rous, voices harsh and loud,—

And hands clapping defiance, thro’ the dark,

Rais’d horrid tumult, whirling round and round

Quick as the drifted sands by whirlwinds tost.

Of this overwhelming din I, horror struck,

Besought the cause. To which my GUARDIAN thus :

“ Useless in moral apathy breathed these.

“ Angels are mingled who nor rebels prov’d,
 “ Nor lent their energies to aid their God.
 “ God then forbade them Heav’n : forbade e’en Hell
 “ To take them, lest against them Hell exult.”

“ Why wail they thus so bitterly their lot ? ”

To this my GUIDE. Ever sequester’d, here
 In sloth they linger. Fame never knew them.
 By justice scorn’d and mercy. Ev’ry lot
 By others borne, to them less terrible.
 Death, that would throw upon their jaded sense
 Oblivion’s pall eternal never will
 Be theirs. But heed them not. Let us pass on.

I then observ’d a banner borne high wav’d
 With rapid whirl incessant : then a throng
 Clust’ring by millions. These a concourse seem’d
 More vast, I, erring, deem’d, than ever death

Subdu'd. Of these ONE SHADE * distinguish'd stood,
 Who, when requir'd to rule, exalted task
 And useful, thence slunk cowardly away.
 The rest denounced God and his foes alike,
 For each nought done. In life they did but breathe.
 They naked now, were goaded by the stings
 Acute of hornets and of wasps, that drew
 Down to their very feet streams intermix'd
 Of tears and blood, which foulest reptiles suck'd.

Far off, dim thro' the dingy space, I spied
 Myriads that eager press'd to line the shore.
 "Who these? Why thus, MY GUIDE?" This his reply :
 "Wait, friend, until the shores of Acheron
 "We gain." Then I, abash'd, fearing my words
 Offensive prov'd, pac'd onward patiently.

The shore now reach'd, a figure, white with age,

* POPE CELESTINE V. who abdicated in 1294.

Guiding his bark, thus hail'd the crowd :—" Outcasts,
 " Doom'd all never to view the skies again
 " On board. Bound are ye to that coast, seasons
 " And elements to feel in fierce extremes.
 " You, (marking me,) hence with thee :—these, shades all."

I moving not—" No passage here ; you, in
 " Some lighter bark, some other haven reach,"
 Resum'd the boatman of the livid lake,
 While round his eye-balls issu'd whirls of fire.

MY GUIDE, retorting brief: " Be that our care :
 " We are protected where the *Will is Pow'r*."
 Down sunk the boatman's shaggy countenance.
 And now, soon as was heard his cruel hail,
 Pale turn'd the souls dismay'd : they gnash'd their teeth ;
 Burst into blasphemies ; mankind, country,
 And kindred, parents, children, and e'en God,
 Denounc'd : then they, with deep and horrid yells,
 To the dire shore where all the wicked wait,

Press'd close in crowds, and around CHARON group'd
 Thick as in Autumn lie the trembling leaves,
 Litt'ring in heaps around the sturdy trunk :
 And as the hawk obeys the falc'ner's lure ;
 So seen, uplifted the tremendous oar
 Of the rough hoary fiend with flaming eyes,—
 The straggling numbers round it quickly flock.
 These gone, ere to the bank the bark return,
 Fresh tribes, importunate, for passage wait.

“ From ev'ry clime (remark'd MY FRIEND) here the
 “ Wicked cluster ; and e'en seem eager for
 “ The other shore. Justice divine proceeds
 “ With subtlest wisdom thus to make their fears
 “ Propel them ever to their final doom.
 “ None virtuous ever cross this pool. Hence ! at
 “ Thee spake CHARON, complaining ; hence his scowl.”

Then did this region (the bare remembrance
 Swathes me still with dread) tremble with earthquake ;

' he woful ground disgorg'd a deaf'ning blast,
Whilst the sulphureous lightnings flitted round.
This scene affected all my senses, that
I fell, as one with soundest sleep oppress'd.

CANTO IV.

CONTENTS.

They enter LIMBO. The persons of fame he saw there detailed.

THUNDERS terrific rattling on my ear
Rous'd me from swoon, and forc'd attention up,
That I look'd round to know where then I stood.—
I was transported to an hideous bank
Bounding a vale, that threw up quailing groans.
So merged in fog this vale, so deep, so dark,
That the eye ach'd, poring ; nor limit could
Descry. My GUARDIAN BARD, all pale, thus spake :

“ Low down beneath this vale to the black world

“ Must we descend : you closely follow me.”

“ MY GUIDE, (I said,) my comforter till now,
 “ If fear seize *you* thus, who will *me* uphold?”

“ My aspect, (he replied) not fear disturbs,
 “ But pity for the wretches groaning there.
 “ With haste move onward, for the way is long.”

We entered now the upper pass that girts
 This vast abyss. Thence nought was heard but sighs
 Heavy, the melancholy throes of mind,
 By both the sexes of all ages heav'd :—
 The air kept ever trembling with their weight.

“ Wouldst thou inquire (MY MASTER thus) who these ?
 “ Know then—not vicious they : but theirs this lot,
 “ Who knew no baptism (the portal to thy
 “ Faith) for they died ere Christ redeem'd the world.
 “ Of these unhappily am I,—and lost.
 “ Without the Gospel we our God serv'd wrong.

“ Our woful destiny is this—Ever

“ Heav’n’s bliss to wish, never Heav’n’s bliss to know.”

Reflecting on their piteous state, I sigh’d :
Sigh’d for the worth I knew kept pining there.

“ MY MASTER and MY LORD (I cried) reveal,

“ (For I was anxious of a perfect faith)

“ If thro’ another’s merit or his own

“ Any from this abode can gain Heav’n’s bliss ?”

Thus to my cautious question he reply’d :

“ Short was my term among them when I saw

“ Descending pow’r * by Vict’ry’s palm adorn’d,

“ Selecting many for the realms of Heav’n.

“ Chief our first parents ; then ABEL ; NOAH ;

“ Righteous MOSES profoundly wise in laws

“ Divine ; the patriarch ABRAHAM ; DAVID,

“ The mighty king ; ISRAEL and ISRAEL’S SIRE ;

* Jesus Christ.

“ HIS SONS, and his wife RACHAEL, wed so long.

“ These were the first of human beings sav’d.”

Thro’ groups we pass’d, thick, cluster’d like a wood
View’d distantly. Then, still descending, saw
Beneath faintly, thro’ vapours dark and dense,
A fire distending to an hemisphere.
Onward, scarce fully seen, mov’d a few shades
That even here obtain’d a mark’d respect.—

Then I: “ Patron of art and science say,
“ What high-ton’d fame is theirs, and how acquir’d
“ That a choice spot should be to them assign’d
“ Clear from all converse with the mean and low?”

“ For their great fame on earth,” MY GUIDE replies,
“ The will of Heav’n has thus advanc’d them here.”

Then spake a voice unknown: “ Give to the bard
“ Sublime, restor’d to us, all honors due.”

Ceasing, four venerable shades advance,
Nor sad, nor gay ;—theirs pure serenity.

To me MY GUIDE : “ Him, with drawn sword, observe,
“ Who leads the band of poets, HOMER he.
“ HORACE moves next ; then OVID ; LUCAN last.
“ Because the name by which the single voice
“ Hail’d me, each owns my due, thus me they greet.”

I saw collected that illustrious school
Where he, the master of superior song,
Soars the bold eagle of the choral tribe.
They, after converse, courteous turn to me.—
At this smil’d VIRGIL. Still more honors mine.
They chose me of their train and plac’d me sixth.
We, to the light advancing, on high themes
Commun’d, appropriate then, now best conceal’d.
Near us was now perceiv’d a castle huge,
Defended by its seven stupendous walls :

The outmost washed by a fine stream, which we,
Like dry land, cross'd ; then pass'd thro' all its gates.

Pacing a meadow of the liveliest green,
We saw some ruminating shades, seldom
That spake : but then, high minded, musical.
An eminence we gain'd, illum'd around,
Whence we descry'd heroes of stately fame,
That but to look on, in my own esteem
Rais'd me.—ELECTRA* heading many a chief;
HECTOR; ÆNEAS; CÆSAR, still eagle-
Ey'd; PANTHISILEA and CAMILLA.—
LAVINIA, and her royal sire, the good
LATINUS, associates were apart :
BRUTUS, proud foe of Tarquin ; and the chaste
LUCRETIA ; CORNELIA too ; JULIA,† and

* Mother of Dardanus the founder of Troy.

† Julius Cæsar's daughter, and wife to Pompey.

MARCIA, (CATO's was this, that POMPEY's wife :)

And SALADIN,* a solitary there.

Beyond them stood, of metaphysics fam'd,

The SIRE :† then SOCRATES and PLATO next ;

DEMOCRITUS, who nought in nature saw

But chance ; THALES ; DIOGENES the proud ;

EMPEDOCLES, with ANAXAGORAS ;

ZENO ; and HE‡ who wept the woes of man ;

In herbal knowledge DIOSCORIDES,

High noted ; ORPHEUS ; LINUS ; and TULLY ;

SENECA the sage ; EUCLID, who measur'd

Worlds ; PTOLEMY ; GALEN ; HIPPOCRATES ;

Great AVICEN, his commentator, and

So emulous of him, AVERROIS there.

And mighty numbers more I saw, more (such

My theme sublime) than memory can name.

* The Sultan who was rival of Richard Cœur de Lion.

† Aristotle.

‡ Heraclitus of Ephesus.

From these companions, this complacent spot,
Led by MY BARD, I enter'd on a scene
Where uproar reign'd uncheck'd ; and all so dark
That not one glimmer could regale the sight.

CANTO V.

CONTENTS.

They arrive at the second region. They meet with MINOS, who judges the sinners. Lawless love punished here.

DOWNWARD proceeding, we arriv'd where sweeps
A nether circle, narrower than the last.

Here hideous yells from pain, in dread extremes,
Fiercely assail'd us : and at our entrance,
Grinning most horribly, stern MINOS* stood,

* It is asserted, that the Christians, in the superstitious ages, believed in the existence of the Heathen gods, but believed them to be infernals. Though DANTE were of this number, it is difficult to reconcile, with the solemnity of his subject, his having intrusted the souls of Christians to the judgment of MINOS, when his creed had taught him that a very different personage was to

Who hears in turn the wretches all who press
 In line unbroken, endless, each to tell,
 With ready accusation, all their crimes.
 He judges each : to each appropriate pangs
 Assigns irrevocably. These thus known,
 Around him MINOS twists his tail immense.
 The clinging coils the many fierce degrees
 Denote of torment, each convicted shade
 Is doom'd to bear, doom'd everlastingly.

We enter'd ; and awhile his awful task
 The ruthless judge suspends. " Why here ?" he cried,
 " Why com'st thou to this hospital of woe ?
 " Wide tho' these portals, know, misguided man,
 " Thou shouldst with caution step, with caution trust."

To this MY GUIDE : " Why thus exclaim ? Check not
 " His footsteps trac'd above, where *Will is Pow'r*."

judge " the quick and the dead." Indeed throughout the poem,
 DANTE's agents add no dignity to it.

Dark, amidst cries that deafen, yells that quail,
 Now stand we. Horrors girt us round.—There was
 A storm of noise, to the sense astounding :
 Not wilder tumults dash against the ear
 When roaring winds beat ocean into foam.—
 It was the blast of hell that, furiously
 In ruthless sweep, the spirits convicted,
 Whirl'd downward in a vortex terrible ;
 Who, at the verge of the tremendous gulf
 Impell'd, mad with the dread of agonies
 Acuter still, louder forth bellow, and
 More fiercely, in demoniac terms their rage,
 Until they even taunt Divinity.

These torments theirs (I found) who, in the flesh,
 Allow'd not reason to retrench the will :
 But wallow'd ever in their carnal crimes.

As birds, warn'd by the first chill breeze, in clouds
 Collect and wheel with restless wing their course

In convolutions mazy, to select
 Some shelter from inclemency : so were
 These wicked souls by the tyrannic gust
 Above, below, in all directions, driv'n.
 And as the cranes in flocks their flight direct
 Clamm'ring : so these, despairing of release,
 Despairing e'en of mitigated pain,
 In trains rush howling to their ebon doom.

Then I : " O MASTER, name those chief thus driv'n !"
 " The wife of NINUS that,—SEMIRAMIS.
 " O'er many tongues and nations empress she,
 " Who now bend humbly to the sultan's pow'r.
 " Gross was her lech'ry, shamelessly provok'd :
 " E'en her own edicts cater'd for her crime.
 " The next for love destroy'd herself ; and broke
 " Those am'rous vows to fond SICHÆUS giv'n.
 " There CLEOPATRA moves, luxurious queen ;—
 " And HELEN there, on whom a murd'rous war
 " Falls guiltily. ACHILLES mark, stern chief

“ And conqu’ror fam’d, conquered at length by love.”

PARIS and TRISTRAM,* and a numerous band

He nam’d to me, slaves all to potent love.

Such chiefs of ancient days, such women here

To see was piteous ; and I nearly swoon’d.

“ O ! POET, name, for anxious I to know,

“ The pair approaching us so fleet.” “ When near,

“ (Said he) mildly beseech, for mild their souls.

“ Then thine the tale of love that ruin’d them.”

A fiery current drove them near, when I :

“ Unhappy souls and gracious, here converse.”

As doves fly fondly at their nestlings’ call :

So quitting Dido and her group, this pair,

The force of their complacent habits such,

Waft swiftly to us thro’ the mirky tide.

“ O mortal, bless’d by God, were I allow’d,

* Tristram de Leon. A knight of Arthur’s Round Table.

" To Him should now for thee be giv'n my prayers,
 " That from the world, stain'd with our blood, thou spedd'st
 " To visit us in this our dun abode!
 " Compassion prompts thee, hear our sorry tale,
 " Now that diminish'd turbulence permits.

" My native land* is spread upon the shore
 " Where Po, swell'd with his num'rous streams, rolls his
 " Wide waters to the sea. Love, that delights
 " To dwell in courteous breasts, lodg'd firm in his,
 " My comely youth! and which, since so
 " Distressing its result, I still deplore;
 " Love, prone to pay love's grateful debt, my heart
 " Subdu'd (and as you see, subdues it still)
 " To his fond sighs. At length love ruin'd us—
 " But Caina† gapes to take our murd'rous souls."

These suff'ring shades now known; oppress'd with grief

* RAVENNA.

† Caina. The abode for murderers.

Their tale to hear, their torments to perceive,
 Down sunk my countenance. My friend this saw,
 And question'd me. "Alas! (responding him)
 "What thoughts delicious! and what soft desires
 "Led the sad couple to their dreadful fate!"

A pensive pause ensu'd. Then I: "Thou seest
 "FRANCISCA,* that thy sad disaster and
 "Thy sadder state, raise pity e'en to tears.
 "Say, in your interchange of sweetest sighs,
 "How came disclos'd to thee the doubtful wish?
 "What urg'd thee to surrender all to love?
 "No keener grief (this YOUR FRIEND knows) than theirs
 "Who, having revell'd long in virtuous joys,

* FRANCISCA, daughter of Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, married to Lanciotto, son of Malatesta, lord of Rimini, a man of courage, but deformed in person. She committed adultery with her husband's brother Paolo, a man of a graceful form. They were both put to death by the enraged husband.

“ Recal the sadd’ning scenes that ended them !

“ But, at your wish, hear, and attentively,

“ While I relate (tears following the tale)

“ How dalliance led to vice, and vice to woe !

“ He (my belov’d) and I together once

“ (Unsever’d still) mistrustless sat, and hung

“ Enraptur’d o’er the fervid page, that told

“ Of LANCELOT* enamour’d, where he prints

“ On his kind lover’s captivating smile

“ An ardent kiss.—We stopp’d ;—gaz’d fondly ;—glow’d :

“ In closer contact furtively we mov’d !

“ With hurried pulse his lips press’d mine. The muse

“ Licentious, dangerous, conjur’d this ! The book—

“ We clos’d it, and for ever.—Then too late.”

The piteous pair, with grief and shame surcharg’d,
So much affected me, I sunk in swoon.

* Lancelot, a knight of the Round Table.

CANTO VI.

CONTENTS.

The third region, containing the Intemperate.

My senses now restor'd, suspended by
Excess of pity for the suff'ring pair,
I saw, which ever way I look'd or turn'd,
Suff'ers new, new torments overwhelm'd with.
These in the third and lower circle mov'd,
Where rain perpetual pour'd, cold rain and foul;
Hail-stones enormous pelted them; and snow
In mirky flakes and thick, which on all sides
Throughout the gloomy dark expanse drifting,
Then fell, and on their spongy ground soak'd deep.

Here CERBERUS, whose fierce red eyes flash ire

Implacable, with beard grisly and dun,
 Clotted most filthily, and paunch monstrous,
 With carnage overgorg'd, distended gross—
 Stood barking hideous thro' his triple throat,
 Out-stretch'd to glut the wretch his claws have flay'd,
 Tossing about with wanton wrath its limbs
 Half-rent, the refuse of his slacken'd jaws.
 A wretched and ungodly crew, drench'd by
 This deluge, howl'd like dogs, and restless strove
 Each to find sorry shelter from the next.

When savage CERBERUS, huge reptile, view'd
 Us, he, his tremendous jaws extending,
 Trembling each limb, discover'd all his fangs.
 Large clods of earth, MY GUIDE experienc'd, thrust
 Down his voracious gullet. Now, full cramm'd,
 Quell'd are those yelps that stun the sprites, until
 They wish for deafness; then, like a sated
 Cur, he crouch'd and growl'd inward appeasement.

We onward pass'd, and trampled upon shades
 As upon flesh with earthly life imbued.
 Distress'd with rain, cold and incessant all
 Together huddled, or lay heaps on heaps
 Prostrate in swamps, and shivering, save one :—
 He, seeing me, uplifts his sodden'd head,
 And spake me thus : “ Thou who now visitest
 “ These tracts infernal, say, if thou know'st me,
 “ For thou wert born long ere I left thy world ?”

Then I : “ Thy suff'rings, soaking here in filth,
 “ If not most noxious, yet more disgusting
 “ Far than all around, haply have chang'd thee,
 “ For of a former friend no trace remains.”

“ Thy city, that with envy overflows,
 “ In brighter days shelter'd me. There, I was
 “ Nam'd CIACCO. * For gluttony now doom'd,

* Ciacco. A pig, in the Italian language. He, though a noble of Florence, was so called on account of his gluttony.

“ And all around me, to this mire and stench,
 “ Replenish’d with these foetid rains pouring
 “ Impetuous.” He ceasing, I, in return :

“ Thy state receives my piteous tears : but say,
 “ How far will civil broil the city waste ?*
 “ And why does discord ravage it ? Boasts it
 “ No chieftain to its welfare firm ?” Then he :

“ Ere either party shall prevail, fierce will
 “ The murd’rous contest rage, and long : then yield
 “ The less ferocious bands.†—This for three years.
 “ When aided by a potent neighbour’s arm ‡
 “ They conquer ; and their foe,§ subjected, sway
 “ Far too severely ; for their yoke, tho’ borne
 “ Perforce, is borne indignant and with ire.

* Florence. Then divided by the factions of the Bianchi and Neri.

† The less ferocious bands. The Neri.

‡ Potent neighbour’s arm. Charles of Valois.

§ And their foe. The Bianchi.

But envy, pride, and avarice, their hearts
 "Inflam'd so highly they no mercy felt.
 "Just, tho' neglected, there will *two* be found."

He ceas'd his doleful history. Then I :
 "Still would I further parley ask of thee :
 "Say, FARINATA and TEGGHIAIO, where ?
 "MOSCA, ARRIGO, and RUSTICUCCI,*
 "With others, that among ye wrought for good ?
 "I yearn to know their state. Where are they ?
 "Taste they hell's poison or the cup of bliss ?"

"Their vices† (he replied) greater, drove them
 "Lower : with blackest souls they congregate,
 "Which you will witness should you there descend.
 "When to your beauteous world return'd, do tell

* Rusticucci. Punished in Canto XVI.

† Their vices. It is almost needless to remark, that as DANTE was here relating facts of history subsequent to the period of this dialogue, Ciacco is prophetic.

“ Of me to others :—but I can no more.”——
 Then, eyeing me askance and wistful, down
 Upon his putrid bog he flounc’d again,
 And plung’d his head among his foul compeers.

“ There (said MY GUIDE) will he lie wallowing
 “ Until th’ angelic trumpet’s final blast.
 “ And when shall come their Adversary, arm’d
 “ With pow’r divine, all then, revested in
 “ Their carnal frame, ent’ring their gloomy tomb
 “ Once more—shall hear their dread eternal doom.”

With gentle pace, discoursing slightly on
 The world to come, MY GUIDE and I pass’d all
 These spirits, and their quagmires feculent.
 For thus I question’d him : “ When that dread day
 “ Arrive, will then their torments be decreas’d,
 “ Or aggravated ?” “ Consult thy doctrines,”
 He replied : “ As grows the sense more perfect,
 “ More vivid feels it—happiness or pain

“ This sinful race will ne’er pain perfect know,
“ But may then approach it.” He this and more,
While on we wheel’d a dreary track downward,
Where we met PLUTO, general foe to man.



CANTO VII.

CONTENTS.

The fourth region, containing MISERS and PRODIGALS : and the fifth region containing, in separate departments, those guilty of excessive rage, of envy, and of malice, &c.

“ SATAN ! O Satan ! ” bawl’d in hoarse acclaim
Of wonder and alarm, PLUTO. Then thus
MY SAPIENT GENTILE : “ Fear him not. Not all
“ His pow’r malign can harm thee, nor arrest
“ Thy steep descent.” To PLUTO, swell’n with pride,
He thus : “ Peace, ravager, and still thy rage :
“ Or let it prey upon thine inward self.
“ On high account we trace these regions, will’d
“ In Heav’n ; whence, arm’d with vengeance, Michael, the
“ Rebel, chief in insolence, hurl’d headlong.”
As some huge mast, with all its sails swell’d out,
Snapp’d by a gust sweeps many a spacious wave :
So fell prostrate th’ infernal king dismay’d.

To the fourth bank arriv'd, we saw beneath,
 The Gulf immense, that all the wicked hous'd.
 Eternal justice here had fix'd to crimes
 Appropriate punishments, as man deprav'd,
 Had sought out vices, varied, numberless.

Oh! that mankind should urge by crime—such woe!
 As wave on wave by rough Charybdis dash'd
 Against resisting waves reverberate;
 So here, contending multitudes, in spleen
 Advance; and, their chests heaving with the weight
 Of dross, huge, pond'rous, clash. For these they strive;
 As each alternate gain the cumbrous charge.
 Then do they rage thund'ring upbraidings coarse:
 "You spendthrifts profligate."—Th' accurs'd retort:
 "And harden'd hoarders you." Thus, endlessly
 All—toil, reproach, reproach and toil again.

Here my heart sick'ning at the useless strife,
 The cause I sought for. Thus MY FRIEND responds:

" These, on the left, with shaven crowns, priests that
 " Perverted blessings into crime. The hands
 " Heav'n heap'd they emptied wastefully ; and those,
 " To whom œconomy was law, niggard,
 " And selfish, unremittingly amass'd.
 " Those with their hoary heads—popes, cardinals
 " In competence, unblest with heirs, hoarded
 " Huge wealth from avarice pure, excuseless. They,
 " Pursuing still their practices, are curs'd."

" Of these, mighty their rank thus stain'd by sin,
 " Some surely I should recognise ?" " The search
 " Were vain, (he said). Among their herd unmark'd,
 " They slunk to death, for never one good deed
 " Beckon'd attention to their character."
 " Therefore this strife unvaried, ever theirs.
 " These from the tomb, with fist close clench'd, shall rise
 " With head close shaven those. Two classes, that,
 " In extreme usurious or profuse, their
 " Lives had shorten'd, so in this wretched place,

“ Wretched beyond my pow’r of phrase to tell,
 “ With rankling strife they uselessly turmoil.

“ Hence evident, my son, tho’ Fortune heap
 “ Her stores magnificent, the boon how vain !
 “ Not all the gold these ever gather’d, no,
 “ Nor all embowell’d in capacious earth,
 “ Could urge them, grateful, to acclaim—“ enough.”

“ This Fortune whom you mention, MASTER, who
 “ That can earth’s favors clinch within its grasp ?”

“ Man, senseless, hear attentive,” he reply’d.
 “ He who Supreme wrought the transcendent whole,
 “ Grand beings gave, with pow’rs appropriate cloth’d,
 “ Throughout th’ ethereal space, sep’rate to rule,
 “ With splendor each in distribution fair.
 “ On earth he Fortune sent.—Hers to dispense
 “ The gifts one nation owns exuberant
 “ O’er one inane. Whole families, grand, proud,

“ Resplendent, she—prostrates to poverty ;
 “ And with their wealth the haggard pauper loads.
 “ No human pow’r nor wisdom can control
 “ Her ordinance, nor e’en her track descry.
 “ The crafty snake, coil’d under sunny sward,
 “ Darts not to sting, than she, more stealthily.
 “ Ever on wing she hovers over man ;
 “ Meddles with all, and works perpetual change.
 “ Vociferating man importunate ;
 “ Taunts from the favor’d ;—gratulations loud
 “ From those o’er whom gigantic ruin strides
 “ Beetling—she, pregnant of her will, and in
 “ Herself, like Godhead, blest—unheeded hears.

“ But let us now to deeper woe descend ;
 “ And haste : for at departure those same stars
 “ That blaz’d meridian beams, spangle the west.”

Beyond our circle’s farthest verge a pool
 Boil’d over, and its castings form’d a stream,
 Crawling, of dingiest blue. We kept its course,

Till its expanse became the Stygian marsh.
 Round the grey margin of the strand malign,
 Deep in this marsh a dirty tribe I saw
 All naked flound'ring, who against themselves
 Held raging fray. Their limbs contorting, they,
 Heads, breasts, beat cruelly, and their flesh tare.
 "Behold, my son, these wretched beings, all
 "Victims of anger, self-miserable!
 "Others beneath the stagnant liquid dwell,
 "And bubble up, as you perceive, their sighs."

"Could utt'rings pierce the slime," thus they: "We, when
 "Alive, breathing sweet air, by cheering suns
 "Illum'd, in envious mist clouded ourselves;
 "Thence dwell we deep within this sable slough."
 "But they can gurgle only their dire moans."

Then pass'd we numbers wallowing, and who
 Filth consum'd, till we between the marsh and
 Dry bank winding, a mighty castle reach'd,

C A N T O VIII.

CONTENTS.

DANTE and VIRGIL, quitting the POOL OF ENVY, arrive at the gate of Dis, the metropolis of Hell.

MY narrative I thus pursue. Arriv'd
Close to the castle, we perceiv'd—wo lights,
That from its loftiest turret flar'd signal
To one far off thro' distance—dim, minute.

Source of my knowledge, say, "Why this? To whom
" Responds that light? Its agents who?" Then he :
" Unless the fumes emitted from this marsh
" So foul, obstruct thy sight—the cause behold."

The feather'd shaft, twang'd from the bowstring, flits

Not faster than a bark making our shore.

One at the helm exclaims: "Arriv'd, dread shade?"

"PHLEGYAS, * thou errest," said MY GUIDE. "Thy task

"Now, nought but to waft us o'er." PHLEGYAS then,

As one of sudden injuries inform'd,

Scowl'd silent, and look'd down discomfited.

My friend on board I follow'd. But the bark,

Press'd by my weight terrestrial, the waves deep

Sever'd, sunk to the brink and nearly swamp'd.

Passing the ferry—one, puddling in mire

All foul, address'd me thus: "Who are you, say,

"That here before your time you shew yourself?"

* PHLEGYAS. His daughter Coronis was violated by Apollo. The injured father revenged himself by burning the temple of the culprit. For this revenge was he sent to Hell. Why did DANTE, a Christian poet, in some measure justify by this notice of him, the foul transaction? But, alas! VIRGIL says:

Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere divos.

Surely *divos* should mean merely the powerful.

“ Merely for passage here,” I said—“ Who you
 “ So foul?” Thus spake a shade. “ Hence, and your plaints—
 “ (Thus stopping him) I know you thro’ your soil.”
 He now stretch’d out his arms and seiz’d our stern.
 MY BARD, driving far off the filthy wretch,
 Commanded him to join his beastly crew.
 Then to me turning, he, with kind embrace
 Spoke me : “ Blest be that matron, gentle friend,
 “ That bore thee, vice so disdainning. That cur
 “ On earth no record left of good : alone
 “ Notorious for disgusting arrogance.
 “ It still usurps his mind, it rages still. ;
 “ Great kings there are above, who, bristling high
 “ In pride, lording around them, shall, like hogs,
 “ Wallow in this mire, leaving to the world
 “ No note but their inclement characters.”

“ MY BARD, feign would I see him in this pool
 “ So soilly plung’d.” “ Be granted that request,”
 He said, “ ere thou shalt reach the coming shore.”

Soon then I saw him struggling with a crew
Daub'd filthily (for which I thank'd my God).

PHILIP ARGENTI * clamoring as they strove.

They mangled him. He then himself rent sore
Thro' rage. We pass'd him as unworthy note.

Our ears were next with louder complaints annoy'd.

"Behold, my Son, crowded with suff'ring souls

"The city nam'd from Dis." I look'd. Its mosques

Were seen flashing sulphureous hues and red.

"They but reflect (he said) the mass of fire

"From nether hell up tossing streams of flame."

Deep were the trenches round the city: wall'd

As if of harden'd iron wrought. Near it

We mov'd. But long our rowers plied in vain

* PHILIP ARGENTI. Poor Philip Argenti! Man holding the sword of political justice, does as much as he ought to do when he drives a criminal over the bourn of life. To pursue him afterward with the rancour with which DANTE seems agitated, does not well suit with Christian principles.

The shore, fit landing to obtain : at length
Loud bawl'd the pilot—" here must we debark."

Forth from the city gates bursting, I saw
Thousands of dæmons erst, that here, like rain,
Came pelting down in heavy show'rs from Heav'n.
" And who art thou (they cried) that dare alive
" Venture to visit hordes of death ?" MY GUIDE
Drew them aside and spoke them privily.
Tho' stifled much their rage, they sternly said :
" Advance alone, thou who shalt woful here,
" For ever dwell : that rash one, there must bide.
" The vent'rous fool must, if he can find it,
" Back to his world again." To hear these words ;
Despairing to return there, think, reader—
How terrible must have been my feelings !

" If still I may, MY GUIDE, your kindness hope,
" You that have brought me safe thro' regions dire
" Thrice perilous ; upheld me sinking, gave

" Frail nature in me courage half divine,
 " O leave me not to let me perish here !
 " Let us return together, since denied
 " A progress thro' these portals." " Or molest
 " (Replied MY GUIDE) or stop our way dare none.
 " Check then thy fears. Wait here for me. The while
 " This comfort thine :—forsake thee I will not."
 He left me. Dreary were my thoughts : and doubts
 Dismal of his return still harass'd me.

Soon was the conf'rence clos'd. Nought of the terms
 I heard : but saw the dæmons instant turn
 And ent'ring quickly, swung against MY FRIEND
 Fiercely their gates, and barr'd him out. With brow
 Bereft of daring hope ; tardy of step
 And pensive he rejoin'd me ; sigh'd, then said,
 Low ton'd : " Who this denial could have caus'd ?
 " My Son, hurt tho' I be, despair thee not.
 " I shall soon conquer this their arrogance.

“ They once before, at a less private gate,
“ And still unlock’d, refusal gave : that gate
“ O’er which you read th’ inscription half obscur’d.
“ But now advances down the craggy cliff,
“ And all the circles passing—one, without
“ A guide, of power to give us passage here.”

CANTO IX.

CONTENTS.

They enter the city. They behold the punishment for Heresy.

ALARM had turn'd me pale. Perceiving this,
My friend his own emotions hid. He stopp'd—
Mute stood, as list'ning—Nothing could be seen
Distant, for vapours black swam thick between.
“ We this outrage must o'ercome : but if not,
“ The aid of ONE—How tedious till arriv'd.”
Abrupt thus he : and by concealing part,
Part utt'ring, new terrors rais'd within me !

“ Was ever one (so question'd I MY GUIDE)
“ Within the higher regions, where they wail

" Privation of sweet hope ; doom'd to descend
 " This concave's dark extreme ?" Thus he replied :
 " Scarce ever known. ERICTHO* once, sorc'ress
 " Impower'd to replace departed souls
 " Within their wonted bodies, conjur'd me.
 " (Earth had not then my mortal frame long claim'd)
 " She forc'd me by her incantations thro'
 " Those gates, down to the den where Judas writhes.
 " A dreadful region, dreadful in extreme,
 " Central in Hell, thence most remote from Heaven.
 " Well known to me our way ; be then appeas'd,
 " But none the doleful city's gates can pass
 " Unagitating furious wrath within."

With these, and themes less memorable,
 Kindly my mind he from my present fears
 Diverg'd, till the red town we saw, rear'd high,
 And higher seem'd, as out gush'd flame in flakes.

* ERICTHO. A sorceress of Thessalia.

Hereon, all smear'd with blood, three furies stood,
 Around their loins, in many a volume, coil'd
 Green serpents hideous, and their head binding
 Huge forky snakes, hung clust'ring for their hair.

“ Behold these hags (my kind informant said)
 “ Megæra on the left, Alecto right,
 “ Tysiphone between.” With their long claws
 Their breasts fiercely they tore : concussions loud
 Forc'd with their haggard palms ; and madden'd, scream'd,
 Vengeance astounding on Medusa's head.
 “ If thou wert here (they cried) we into stone
 “ Would batter thee. Had we to Theseus been
 “ Less merciful, that mortal now below
 (Beholding me) “ durst not have ventur'd here.”
 “ Turn, turn your back,” MY GUARDIAN cried, “ Glance ye
 “ One instant on the Gorgon's face, and ye
 “ Are ever fix'd irrevocably here.”
 I turn'd, and with my hands I cover'd close

My eyes; and he too kindly press'd with his—
Against the dreaded sight a double guard.

Ye sound of intellect, the doctrine mark
That lies conceal'd beneath these mystic lines!

Now on a sudden o'er the turbid lake
Roll'd a tempestuous noise that shook the shore!
Not greater issues from the cruel storm
That drives off men and herds tumultuously,
And spreads a forest litt'ring o'er the plain.

My eyes uncover'd: "View (he cried) that foam
"Whence fogs opaque arise." I then beheld
Thousands of frightened spirits that, like frogs
Jostled in heaps to shun some serpent's fang,
Waded in clusters thro' the putrid foam.
—The cause I saw. I saw majestic stride
Over the waves that durst not wet his sole,

ONE, who with gentle undulation mov'd
 His hand, and straight th' obedient mists retire.
 Divinely mission'd he, seem'd evident,
 And much displeased. I, at MY MASTER's will,
 Mute stood while passing, and due reverence made.
 He touch'd with slender wand the gates. The gates
 Fly wide. Then at the threshold thus spake he :
 " Wretches despis'd, victims of Heaven's wrath,
 " Why strove you thus presumptuous to arrest,
 " Vain hope, Heav'n's will resistless ? Well ye knew
 " How oft dire punishments and prompt, follow'd
 " Your aim rebellious, to control firm fate.
 " The throat and loins of Cerberus* still bear
 " Marks, by his fretted hide, of griping chains."

He then departed : while his brows betray'd
 More pressing duties, weightier cares divine !

* Cerberus ; dragged by Hercules.

Our entrance by his advent now secure,
 The walls we pass'd. With dread, yet anxiously,
 My eyes around I cast to scan what scenes
 This fortress huge contain'd of misery !
 Wide is the plain of Arles,* where the Rhone
 Creeps until it stagnates. A plain was here
 As wide, and with death's horrors superspread !
 Tombs here as numerous as Pola† strews
 About its suburbs, which to Italy
 A limit sweeps : but these more awful far !
 The marble here no silence knew ; nor gave
 Respite to wretchedness ! These sepulchres,
 Like molten metal, gusts of heat effus'd ;
 And every gap and crevice vollied forth
 All tones obstreperous from torment wrung,

* Arles, in Provence. Famed by Ariosto for a battle between the Franks and Moors.

† Pola. A city of Istria, near the gulph of Quarnaro, in the Adriatic.

Telling the suff'rer's crime on earth how great !

" Their crime was Heresy." Thus spake MY FRIEND.

" Here tortur'd lie, chiefs and their follow'rs, sect

" By sect in tombs of varied heat, as they

" With better gifts varied from sacred truths."

Thus ending, to the right he turn'd. We both

Then pass'd between these victims and the tow'r.

CANTO X.

CONTENTS.

The conversation of the HERESIARCHS with DANTE.

BETWEEN the tombs of sinners and the wall,
There was a secret way. Thro' this we pass'd.

“ My virtuous, wise CONDUCTOR, who thro' these
“ Spacious windings lead'st me thus, say—can these
“ Be seen, for in their unclos'd sepulchres
“ They lie, yet none above the brink appear?”

“ Their mortal relicks that on earth are left,
“ Will in the vale of Josaphat* their souls,

* Jehoshaphat. See Joel, c. iii. v. 2.

“ Here placed, rejoin. Then will their graves be clos’d.

“ Here Epicurus and his pupils lie,

“ Who with the body gave to death the soul :

“ This and those other things which you *conceal*,

“ Shortly shall be known to you.” “ Sapient BARD,

“ That I might less annoy thee, not to *hide* .

“ My will to know, inquiry thus I bound.”

“ O thou who, tho’ a breathing soul, thro’ this

“ Infernal city passest thus, I pray

“ Thee Tuscan, for by thy speech I know thee

“ Bred, and of its fam’d city, much with me

“ Offended, stop.” These words, and from a grave

Issued, me to MY BARD sent crouching. “ Turn,

“ (Said MY GUARDIAN) turn to him : fear thee not :

“ See FARINATA.”* I turn’d, and saw him

Up to the girdle ris’n, he look’d with front

Of pride and menace, scoffing even Hell.

* Farinata dell Uberti, of Florence. Chief of the Ghibellines.

MY FRIEND, forcing me near his tomb, told me
 With caution to converse with him. The shade
 Demands disdainful, thus—"Thy race?—Say who?"
 To him I then fully my race reveal'd.

"They were mine enemies inveterate.

"(With hastiness he cried.) Tho' potent they,

"Twice did I rout and banish them." "And twice

"(Said I) they rallying return'd; an art

"Nor you nor all your partisans could learn."

Near me a shade* uprose who seem'd to kneel,
 For only visible his head. He star'd
 Anxious around him, as in search of one
 Who might be with me. Soon the fond idea
 Vanish'd. Then thus in tears he spake: "If pow'r
 "Of genius sole gave thee the privilege
 "In this contracted dark domain alive
 "To visit me, why is not here my Son?"

* Cavalcante Cavalcanti.

I pointing to MY GUIDE far off, replied :

“ He—my companion, whom your GUIDO* did

“ Esteem too little.” (For by his words and
Punishment, well the shade I recogniz’d.)

Then eagerly thus he : “ *Did ?* saidst thou *did ?*
“ Is he then dead ? Does not day’s blessed light
“ Illume his eye ?” The PARENT SHADE his death
Inferring from my procrastinated
Answer, back fell supine, and rose no more.
But FARINATA unsubdued, writh’d not
Tho’ tortur’d : and his converse thus renew’d :
“ To hear my bands have rallied not on thine,
“ Doubles the torments I already feel.
“ But by that queen I swear, that governs here,
“ Ere fifty times her splendour she regain,
“ How difficult from *exile to return*,
“ Will be an *art* to thine experience giv’n.

* Guido, the son of Cavalcanti.

" Now if thou hop'st in safety to return,
 " Say, why your councils levell'd such fierce laws
 " Against my conquer'd friends." " Those laws (I said)
 " Were judg'd the merited return for the
 " Vast slaughter of our routed hosts, whose blood
 " The limpid stream of Arbia stains, for which
 " Our holy domes peal with our vengeful prayers."

He sigh'd confession, shook his head, then said :

" Not I alone ; nor leagued I wantonly,
 " But when their fury Florence would destroy,
 " I stay'd the crime ; and stood its champion sole."

Him then I thus address'd : " Solve me this doubt,

" (So may to all thy race be ever peace !)
 " How thine the power to pierce futurity,
 " Tho' veil'd the present hour and past ?" Then he
 Thus answer'd. " As to the sight defective,
 " Plain is the distant view, the near not seen
 " Or dimly, so to us is giv'n to know,

" A light, the source Almighty grants us here,
 " Man's future fate, the past and present screen'd,
 " Till some arriving spirit brings the tale ;
 " This pow'r will end when time on earth shall close."

Conscious of error, smitten by remorse
 That I had giv'n to Cavalcanti pain,
 I said: " Tell that poor shade (who misconceiv'd
 " My silence, while I this doubt revolv'd on,
 " Now satisfied by you)—his son still lives."

MY MASTER beck'ning, I the shade besought
 In haste, who were entomb'd with him of note?

" That first is FRED'RICK,* that the CARDINAL,†
 " And there are thousands whom I must not name."
 This said, he then within the tomb retir'd.

* Frederick (Emperor) II. who died, 1250.

† Cardinal Ottaviano Ubaldini.

I turn'd then to MY BARD in thought profound
And sad. As on we walk'd he question'd me
The cause. Then I confess'd my sorrows borne,
For the sad destiny predicted me.

“ Mark (and with solemn finger press'd his lip)
“ When the benignant eye* shalt glance on thee,
“ Thou shalt thy future fortunes better know.”

The wall we quit, and moving to the left,
The middle path we took direct, that led
To the deep vale that sent up horrid stench.

* Benignant eye: Beatrice.



CANTO XI.

CONTENTS.

VIRGIL gives DANTE a general view of their remaining journey.

A BANK was here, aspiring high and steep,
Compass'd with stones in fragments huge and rough.
Its limit we had reach'd, when at our feet
A cavern deep, op'ning abrupt, threw out
Effluvia nauseous and unsufferable.
These to avoid, behind a monument
Of cumb'rous size we stood, whereon was grav'd,
“ Entomb'd here ANASTASIO* lies : a pope
“ Whose mind Photinus did on earth mislead.”

* ANASTASIUS. It seems doubtful whether this refers to Anastasius II. or IV. or whether to Anastasius I. Emperor of the East.

“ Now slowly (counsell’d thus MY BARD) must we
 “ Move down, that habit by degrees may stun
 “ The sense to bear this noxious stench.” Then he,
 At my request our tedious way seduc’d,
 Instructive thus: “ Beneath these stones concrete
 “ And firm, THREE CIRCLES gape expansive (such
 “ As we late have journey’d) diff’ring their bounds,
 “ The lowest least ; and crowded each with souls.
 “ Learn, for thine help when to those regions thou
 “ Shalt come, the varied crimes that sent them there.

“ The vicious aim to injure—or by fraud,
 “ Or force. Injurious chief to man—is fraud :
 “ Thence odious most to Heav’n, and punish’d most.

“ In the FIRST CIRCLE dwell who force employ.
 “ Force on three subjects preys—our neighbour, Heav’n,
 “ And self—self and his wealth, as you shall hear
 “ Detail’d. Hence to confine these guilty tribes
 “ Apart, this circle forms three sections, each

" In the descent express. The upmost third
 " Contains, in torment varying with their crimes,
 " All who their neighbour's wealth, or ease, or life,
 " Forceful have injur'd or destroy'd. The next,
 " Who on themselves have prey'd—who their effects
 " Wasted profusely, or by excesses
 " Lur'd disease. Thus, to them thy beauteous world
 " Seem'd but a den of woe.—They clos'd their fray
 " With that the worst of vengeance against self—
 " Fell suicide. The last, still lower plac'd,
 " Prisons who warr'd with Heav'n. Blasphemers these,
 " And who resist its pow'rs, or laws pervert,
 " As Sodom did of old, Caorsa* still.

" The SECOND of the GRAND CIRCLES holds who
 " Frauds commit against the general good. These
 " Burst that grand chain, divine benevolence !
 " Which all mankind, of every land and sect,

* A city in Provence, once abounding in usurers.

" Compacts, sweet bond, into one family !
 " Here then lie flatt'ers, hypocrites, and cheats,
 " Liars and sorcerers, thieves, and panders vile !

" But who against a friend peculiar, frauds
 " Commit, by him too trusted specially,
 " In the LEAST CIRCLE at the centre plac'd,
 " Are doom'd to be eternally consum'd ;
 " Where chief, as chief in crime, writhes Lucifer."

Clearly describ'd this gulph and the sad hordes
 Within it. " MASTER now explain why those,
 " In the black marsh by winds and rains drifted ;
 " And those who each so fiercely scoff'd, without
 " The city's walls are kept ? If sinners they,
 " Why plung'd not in this gulph ? If not, why there ?

" Unwonted wand'rings foreign thoughts collect,
 " Or loosen'd is your mem'ry. (said MY FRIEND)
 " Your ethics teach—some crimes less heinous ; some

“ Insufferably vile. Incontinence

“ Was theirs, to Heav’n less odious, therefore they,

“ As doom’d to suffer less, apart are kept.”

To him then I: “ Sweet to the sight the sun,

“ So sweet my sombre doubts by thee dispell’d,

“ That I, for pleasure, fain fresh doubts would raise.

“ Be gracious to explain thy former words,

“ Tell me why usury a record bears

“ In Heav’n as a foul crime, and punish’d such.

Thus he replies. “ Philosophy to minds

“ Attentive morally, dictates this lore—

“ That deck’d is nature with the mind divine :

“ And art its will pursues. The Stagyrte

“ Confirms it, shewing clear—that art like a

“ Good pupil follows nature, guide benign,

“ And its instructor! Read Genesis. There

“ Shalt thou find the first of men instructed

“ These to proceed in, as his primest good.

“ Remote from these fair paths, with other hopes,
“ Nature and art condemn’d, the usurer moves.

“ But onward : follow me : for Pisces see
“ Glide thro’ th’ horizon ; to the north-west, drives
“ On the Waggoner ; and hence not distant
“ Lies our way :—rocky the descent and steep.”

CANTO XII.

CONTENTS.

The *first section* of the FIRST CIRCLE within the gates of Dis, for punishing violence, containing Oppressors, guarded by Centaurs.

WE now descended. The pass was Alpine,
Wild, deterring! Like Trent's huge mountain riv'n,
Erst by some earthquake, from its cloudy top
Down to where Adige beats its fractur'd base :
So here, a craggy steep, narrow, abrupt,
And long, scar'd me. Upon the flinty verge
Fierce Minotaur, the monstrous fruit of Crete's
Vile consort, stood. To whom MY GUARDIAN loud :

“ Not here—THESEUS, bold Greek, that slaughter'd thee,
“ Nor one thy sister sends. This visit made
“ To mark thy punishment so merited.”

Hearing these words he, like an ox smit with
 A deadly blow, roar'd out with agony ;
 And whirl'd wildly around and bounc'd upon
 The craggs. " Enter thou quick the pass: (MY FRIEND
 " Enjoin'd) the beast now busied with his rage."

The fragments in the path, some loose, some sharp,
 Press'd by my feet, unusual weight, beneath
 Me slipp'd. I, pond'ring, mov'd. When thus MY FRIEND :

" The ruin by that monster guarded, whose
 " Fell wrath I tam'd, haply thy thoughts engage.
 " Know then, nor cleft nor fall'n was this rock
 " When last I journey'd to the depths of Hell.
 " But when that Mighty One * (if right I judge)
 " Descended there ; and from the FIRST CIRCLE
 " All the chosen numbers up conducted,—
 " Shook was the fœtid concave, as if love

* That Mighty One. JESUS CHRIST, referred to in Canto X.

" Divine, again (as oft a doctrine held below)
 " Relenting, would to chaos change the world:
 " Then here and all around this craggy spot,
 " Rocks in huge fragments toppled from their base.

" But down this valley look : thence on below
 " The bloody river view. There plung'd are those
 " With violence their fellows that assail.

" Oh ! that mankind, and in a life so short,
 " Should, by misrule of passion, do such deeds
 " As doom them thro' eternity to pass,
 " Steep'd in that bloody pool that ever boils !"

I saw, brimful of blood and bubbling high,
 A trench, broad and of vast circumference,
 Girting a plain immense ! Between this trench
 And the rock's base, Centaurs pranc'd onward
 All, as if hunting, arm'd. Observing us
 Descending, suddenly they stopp'd. Then of

Their num'rous herd three gallopp'd up to us,
 And pois'd a chosen spear. "What punishment
 " (Cried one of them aloud to me) is thy
 " Desert? Speak instant or I strike." "Learn, (said
 " MY FRIEND) obtruder now as formerly,
 " To CHIRON only I reply." To me
 MY GUIDE apart. "NESSUS he; whom, burning
 " For the charms of beauteous DEIANIRA,
 " Her husband HERCULES indignant shot.
 " Great CHIRON in the centre stands. He taught
 " ACHILLES. PHOLUS last, irascible."

Then I saw thousands of them prance the verge
 To mark—who from the boiling wave emerg'd
 Above the limit that indulgence drew,
 All ready, down with their darts to thrust them.
 When near these agile monsters we advanc'd,
 CHIRON the huge, an arrow seizing, press'd
 Back on the cheek his beard, as to lay bare
 His lips prodigious—to the herd then spake:

" Observe ye him behind HIS GUIDE that walks :
 " His step, not light like ours, leaves impress deep
 " Of mortal weight." " True : (said MY GUARDIAN, and
 " His breast approach'd) in mortal garb his soul.
 " The horrors of this vale my task to shew
 " Him. By his choice not here : impell'd he came.
 " She, blest in Heav'n, celestial harmony
 " But left awhile to vest me with this charge.
 " Thence he no criminal : no dæmon I.
 " Then by her virtue, that emboldens me
 " This rugged way unslacken'd to pursue,
 " Grant of your tribe one sapient to select
 " A passage meet across this scarlet stream,
 " And pow'rful too upon his back to bear,
 " (Unwonted labor) to the adverse shore
 " His pond'rous pressure : for he, cannot, like
 " Shades, tread buoyant upon air." Then CHIRON
 Order'd NESSUS to return ; giving him
 The task, with charge to drive obstructing herds.

Skirting the margin with our faithful guard,

Cries, we heard, grievous, gurgling thro' the waves
 From some who to their eye-balls in hot blood
 Were sunk. "Mark (said our potent Centaur) four
 "Tyrants who on their people's treasure prey'd,
 "And of their blood were prodigal. Now they
 "In torments unlamented weltring wade.
 "First ALEXANDER, DYONISIUS next,
 "Reckless who delug'd Sicily for years.
 "He with black hairs is AZZOLINO ; * he
 "With flaxen locks OBIZZO D'ESTI,† who
 "From his step-son by merit death receiv'd."

Then to MY BARD I turning, thus he said :

"Let him thy leader be. I will move next."

* AZZOLINO DI ROMANO. A tyrant of Padua, &c. who died in 1260. So atrocious were his deeds, that he became a subject for a tragedy called *Eccerinis*, written in Latin by Albertino Mussato of Padua, cotemporary with DANTE.

† OBIZZO D'ESTI. Marquis of Ferrara, &c. murdered by his own son to obtain the treasures his father had rapaciously collected. DANTE calls him, by way of rebuke, *a step-son*.

Proceeding, we perceiv'd some few, woful,
 Up to the neck immers'd. Our Centaur pointing
 To one solitary shade :—" Mark that wretch !
 " He,* in the bosom of the church, one slew
 ' Whose praise still floats upon the waves of Thames."
 Some to the chest and some below were steep'd,
 Of whom I many knew. As we advanc'd
 Less deep the steaming gore, less'ning, till scarce
 Above the foot some waded. Here we cross'd.

" This simm'ring stream, (said NESSUS) shallow here,
 " Swells high and boils where tyrants flound'ring groan.
 " Justice divine appropriate there consign'd
 " Its scourge on earth, ATTILA ; SEXTUS too ;
 " PYRRHUS, of Epiros the king : and the
 " Two RINIERST who with slaughter horrible
 " Pil'd up the streets—there wail with scalding tears
 " Their state." NESSUS, now quitting us, recross'd.

* GUY DE MONTFORT murdered Henry, nephew of King Henry III. of England, in the church of Viterbo.

† Riniers. Two noted marauders on the public ways in Italy.

CANTO XIII.

CONTENTS.

The second section of the circle for punishing violence, containing suicides.

SCARCE had the Centaur cross'd, than we a spot
Reach'd, trackless, unnatur'd. It ap'd a wood.
No stately stems finely irregular :
But trunks cross-wise and close, that baulk'd all paths ;
Carbuncled clumps, with angled limbs, splinter'd,
Craggy, mimic of stone. The branches long,
Not taper, which, but for knots, would twist, as
Done by hand mechanic. Design'd for leaves
Were patches dry and dun : and as a fruit
Rank poison stuck, noxious to ev'ry sense.

Between Corneto* and Cecina,† where
 The savage beast retires, not wilder scenes !
 Upon these knitted spiky knots, were seen
 Hitch'd fast the nest of Harpies. Monstrous hags,
 Driv'n from the Strophades by Trojan bands,
 Announcing their disgusting destiny.
 Down to the bosom human, thence a bird,
 Their paunches swagg'd, and were pierc'd o'er with quills
 Feather'd in odious clots. On the drear limbs
 And mystic, do these wretches sit and wail.

“ This is the second section (said MY BARD)
 “ And to the horrid sands, not yet perceiv'd,
 “ Extends. Now mark ; and, beyond fable, things
 “ Will here astound thee.” Scarce ended he, than
 Sounds around me issu'd, whence unknown. They
 Cries express'd, as if of human suff'rings.—

* Corneto. A small city near Leghorn.

† Cecina. A river near Leghorn.

I look'd :—the sounds continu'd—sought again
 The cause—in vain. My stagg'ring intellect
 THE BARD discerning ; and that I deem'd the
 Sounds were sent by some dire spirits that lay
 Behind the stumps well hid, said thus to me :

“ False are thy conjectures ; touch but a twig,
 “ Exposure harrowing will prove them wrong.”
 I touch'd one ; and it snapp'd. Instant—“ Why pluck
 “ Me ?” said the trunk. Blood spirted next.—Again
 Thus moan'd it : “ Why rend me ? How merciless !
 “ As *you* are, once was *I*—a living man :
 “ Now rooted here : but had a serpent's soul
 “ Been mine imprison'd, sacrilege thy deed.”

As when a faggot burns, out from one end
 Flows scalding rheum, while from the other, fire,
 So from the trunk at once gush'd words and blood.
 At this, down dropp'd my streaming stick, for I
 Was dreadfully appall'd ! Then spake the BARD.

" Poor shade ! had DANTE to my words giv'n faith,
 " You ne'er this injury had known. Since so
 " He will, as reparation due, when to
 " His world restor'd, your fame extend. Speak on."
 Then from the fracture oos'd in sighs these words :

" That gage so solacing my trust commands :
 " Seduc'd by it hear patiently, tho' I
 " Be prolix in my sadd'ning history.

" The heart of FREDERICK was mine;* wholly,
 " For I his bursting thoughts drove back ; or forc'd
 " To public glare his inmost. Confidence

* The heart of Frederick was mine. Emperor Frederick II. who died in 1250. Pietro delle Vigne, a Capuan, who, by his talents, became, from a low origin, the chief favorite of Frederick. The other courtiers, through envy, accused him, before their monarch, of fictitious crimes ; in consequence of which his eyes were put out. He, thus undeservedly disgraced and ruined, put an end to his existence. Why has not DANTE given somewhere in these, his regions, a place for these courtiers?

" Like this (the curse of kingdoms) ruin wrought
 " On me, and death. For envy, common pest,
 " And ever on the watch, at CÆSAR's court
 " Drew over me my emp'ror's frown : for now
 " Those very friends my credit had uprais'd,
 " Join'd in the treachery. Then I, in hour
 " Of rage, and to defeat assailing shame,
 " By my own hand, injustice dreadful, died !
 " But by the root of this rough trunk I swear
 " I was all faithful to my sov'reign prince ;
 " And he all worthy of my utmost pow'rs.
 " Clear then, O ! clear my slander'd memory."

The stem was silent. Then, after a pause,
 Meet for the mournful scene, to me MY GUIDE :

" If ought you wish to know, quickly require."

" Too much, (this my reply) too much oppress'd

" My heart. Be thine the task." Then, him immur'd,
 MY FRIEND address'd. " Since DANTE, courteous, will
 " On earth thy character uphold, disclose
 " The cause that these poor souls are doom'd to lie
 " In sterile bark colaps'd; and there, how long?"

Then from the arid trunk came grievous sighs
 And utt'rance thus: " With speed thy wish I grant.
 " Down from the seventh cavern MINOS hurls
 " Headlong the wicked. To this place they fall;
 " And casual, like the grain upon the earth,
 " They root: green branches spring, but spring,
 " Alas! in vain. For the devouring beaks
 " Of harpies pluck the tender leaves, which pain
 " Produces sharp, incessant, and these plaints.
 " But on the last and solemn day of count,
 " Ours, with all other souls, when summon'd, rise,
 " Save our bodies: they, since on earth by our
 " Own foul deed from the soul sever'd, must be
 " Apart kept ever: for we are destin'd

“ Here the odious load to draw, and hang it
 “ On the same stem that prisons now the soul.”

The voice recedes.—We listen’d.—It was gone.
 A noise now bursts on us resembling that
 From the wild boar, when thro’ the clutter’d wood,
 Hard hunted. On the left broke forth two SPRITES
 That follow’d close each other. Naked they :
 All bruise’d : with wounds that stream’d down blood, from
 branch
 And fractur’d limb protruding, sharp and hard.
 Black bloodhounds them pursu’d, with deep-mouth’d yelp,
 Bounding and fresh as but that moment from
 The couples clear’d. “ Oh, save me ! save me, Death !”
 Exclaim’d the foremost wretch. The other thus :

“ LANO,* in TOPPO’s field to fight, than now

* LANO of Sienna, who, by prodigality, became a pauper. His life being insupportable, he rushed into the thickest of an action

" To run, more earnest." But his strength failing
 Him, he stopp'd ; and to conceal himself low
 Crouch'd beneath a knotty clump : short refuge,
 For straight the curs high blooded, bay'd the wretch,
 Tore him to pieces and his limbs bare off
 Mangled. MY GUIDE, seizing my hand, approach'd
 This clump, some soul inclosing, for there came
 Out of its bloody fissures quailing groans !
 " JACOBO,* (roar'd this mass articulate)
 " Why must I screen thee ?—why this pain endure ?
 " Not for *thy* crimes should I such suff'rings bear ?"

MY BARD paus'd over it ; then thus he ask'd :
 " Who art thou, from whose uncouth rind, at once
 " Blood in such streams and lamentations gush ?
 " O shades ! (the animated stump replied)

between the Florentines and the Aretini at Toppo, near Arezzo, and was killed.

* Jacobo da Sant Andrea, of Padua, a prodigal who killed himself in despair.

" Look but around ye, see the leaves by force
 " Pluck'd off, in litters left : collect, gently
 " Collect them round my stem ;—they all are mine.
 " I was from Florence,* who its patron chang'd
 " From MARS to HOLY JOHN : and but preserv'd
 " On Arno's bridge † a relick of the god,
 " Woes from his vengeance would the city feel ;
 " And vain those toils that, when ATTILA's wrath
 " Sunk it to ashes, rear'd again its domes.

" My roof I made my gibbet : and thence died."

* I was from Florence. This person is unknown.

† A relick. This relick was, with the bridge on which it stood, carried away by a flood in 1337.



CANTO XIV.

CONTENTS.

The third section of the circle for punishing violence, containing
Blasphemers and Atheists.

FOR my compatriot hoarse with moaning, I,
By pity mov'd, with tender hand collect
His vital leaves, and place them round the trunk.

The SECOND CIRCLE's limit now appear'd,
As slow we winded on the wood's dark edge,
Trick'd out in all its horrible array,
Of garlands sombre waving o'er the ditch.
A plain we came to, sterile : not a plant

Of puniest growth reliev'd the wide expanse
Of soil, sandy as that once CATO* trod.

O, divine vengeance, terrible but just!
How will they dread thee, the most harden'd souls,
Who read what I describe by me now seen?

Tormented variously, vast crowds of ghosts
Were here utt'ring complaint! Some lay supine,
Some huddled close; then, others fiercely ran
With undefin'd intent; most num'rous these,
The few supine, but loud. Flame fell in show'rs
Gently but thick, like falls of snow that clothe,
When calm, the Alps. Or like that fire that met
Gaunt ALEXANDER† on his Indian march,
Heading his brave battalions, but which they

* CATO, through the burning sands of Lybia marching at the head of POMPEY's beaten army.

† ALEXANDER. A fabulous incident.

Upturning quick extinguish'd. On the sands
 This falling—ev'ry atom struck became,
 Like tinder kindled by collision, fire.
 Doubly tormented thus these guilty shades :
 For scorch'd their hands that ill protect their heads,
 And their feet broil that press th' igneous ground.

“ MASTER, potent to vanquish all, save those
 “ Fierce dæmons at the gates of Dis, say, who
 “ That bulky SPRITE that with relentless front
 “ Lolls on combustion, and in torture taunts ?”
 He heard me. Then exclaim'd. “ As living, I
 “ The same now dead. Tho' in his vengeance JOVE
 “ Far fiercer bolts than which to calx transform'd
 “ My mortal frame and hurl'd me here, fling on ;
 “ Tho' he call VULCAN as in PHLEGRA's fight ;
 “ And him, all MONGIBELLO's sooty slaves
 “ Unbrac'd by heats fuliginous, assist,
 “ Till they, tho' strung with muscles huge and hard

“ As their own metal, one by one shall tire :
 “ Let the forg’d mischief from this congress come
 “ And drive vengeful against me—I move not.”

MY GUIDE then in a tone more harsh than I
 Heard ever from his lips : “ You, CAPANEUS,
 “ No greater punishment need undergo,
 “ Than thus with unremitting pride to rage.”
 Then he, with wonted mildness, me address’d :

“ One of the seven kings, that wretch, who THEBES
 “ Besieg’d, and the Omnipotence of God
 “ (As still) scoff’d blasphemous ! There now he lies
 “ Tortur’d by pride.—But pass him : and mark ye,
 “ Tread not the scorching sand, but skirt the wood.”

We, moving silently, saw gushing from
 The forest’s boundary a stream crimson !—
 The recollection horrid to this day !

As Bulicamè's* tepid rivulets

In baths collect to lave licentious groups :

So this vermilion streamlet, down thro' the

Sand slow oozing, rose up a lake. Its base,

And banks, and margins—one concrete immense :—

Upon its stony brink our passage lay.

“ Of all observ'd since pass'd, that gate of Dis

“ Barr'd against none, most worthy note this stream,

“ That, gurgling, quenches ev'ry passing flame.”

These words MY FRIEND while utt'ring, rais'd within

Me rav'ning wonder, which he thus reliev'd.

“ On Ocean's lap lies Crete, deserted isle,

“ That in the reign of SATURN flourish'd high.

“ Hereon majestic strides Ida, once

“ In waters rich, in verdure—sterile now.

“ This RHEA chose to rear her infant son ;

* Bulicamè. A warm spring near Viterbo.

“ And to avert discov’ry from his cries,
 “ With the loud chaunt of priests she nestled him.
 “ Within this mountain stands a human form*
 “ Whose visage (like a mirror) Rome confronts,
 “ Whose back Damiata. Pure gold the head;
 “ The arms and breast are silver; then all brass
 “ Down to the waist; the rest is iron, save
 “ One foot all clay (the right, its chief support)
 “ The whole, except the gold, marks quick decay.
 “ Out from a scissure rolls a stream of tears
 “ Which, when collected in the grot below,
 “ Down in this vale precipitating, forms
 “ Black Acheron, and Phlegethon, and Styx,
 “ Who flow united thro’ this streight canal
 “ Till they can flow no more, but sleep—the lake
 “ Of Cocytus, whose pow’rs hereafter learn.”

* A human form. Some commentators suppose this image represented Time.

" This stream, since from the world its source, why here
 " Seen only ?" " To the left (MY FRIEND reply'd)
 " We always turn'd : the place is circular ;
 " And we, altho' descending ever in
 " Our circuit, have not yet its orbit made.
 " Let novel objects less excite surprise."
 " But where (I ask'd again) is Lethe ?" Pleas'd
 He return'd. " The seething pool of blood is
 " Phlegethon : but in a distant region
 " Lethe low'rs, wherein lave souls repentant,
 " Till, of their worldly stains, immaculate.
 " But let us quit this dreary wood ; and me
 " Pursuing, on the margin cautious tread :
 " Then safe from flames uprising wilt thou pass."

CANTO XV.

CONTENTS.

The BURNING SANDS : the punishment for unnatural crimes.

THE stony bank now bore us, cement huge !
Which us and the red lake below, that clad
Us with its mist, alike from flames secur'd.
The mounds how lofty by the Flemings rear'd
'Twixt Ghent and Bruges, to protect their land
From rushing oceans ; or the Paduans rais'd
Along the Brent, their cities and their tow'rs,
To guard from Chiarentana's* melting top :

* Chiarentana. When the snows melt on these Alps, they swell the river Brenta, where it rises, to a dangerous height.

But he, its architect inscrutable,
This concrete form'd thicker and loftier far!

We journey'd on. And now (the wood behind
Scarce visible) ghosts along the bank came
Crowding. Each leer'd upon us as we pass'd,
As passengers on one another pore
At night fall, when the moon is new. And as
An aged artisan contracts his lids
To suit his vision to the needle's eye,
So por'd upon us this fell tribe.—Among
Them there was one well known to me. He pluck'd
My garment's hem. I turn'd. "What wonder this?"
He cried, and forward stretch'd his hand. I look'd
Upon his visage, which, tho' scorch'd, retain'd
A semblance to his former. Then spake I:
"What! Sir BRUNETTO* here? Yes, he, my son:

* BRUNETTO of Florence, a preceptor to DANTE, and author of a poem called the *Tresor*.

“ And while this crowd their torrid way drive on,
 “ Receive me in thy train, and converse hold.”

“ Here rather let us sit (I then propos’d)
 “ MY GUIDE permitting it.” “ Alas ! my Son,
 “ Who for a moment stops, a hundred years
 “ Of hottest anguish pays the penalty.
 “ Move on (he said) I *thee* will follow : then,
 “ *My tribe*, doom’d to eternal pangs again.”

To tread the scorching sand I dar’d not : thence
 Was I constrain’d, in my communion with
 Him, low from my stupendous bank to bend.

“ How art thou here (he ask’d) ere yet arriv’d
 “ Thy mortal hour : and thy companion, who ?”

“ But yester morn, in hour serene, prime too
 “ In life, my way on earth I miss’d. Striving

“ To pass again the valley, him I met—

“ Who now conducts me home thro’ these domains.”

“ Pursue thy guiding star (he said) : for if

“ The judgment of my happier days err not,

“ An haven of renown will guard thy toils:

“ Had not untoward fate o’ertaken me,

“ Since Heav’n is so benignant to thee, all

“ My ready aid gladly had urg’d thy work.

“ But that ungrateful race malign, of old,

“ That down from Fesolé came pouring, curs’d

“ With all their mountain roughness still, and all

“ Their flinty character, thy courteous deeds

“ With enmity will pay. The reason clear—

“ Crabs never suit with luscious figs. Far back

“ Thro’ many ages, Fame, this people held

“ As covetous and blind, envious and proud.

“ Avoid them ; never tread their barb’rous paths.

" Fortune so high thy fame will raise, that by
 " Both parties, hung'ring for thine aid, thou shalt
 " Be sought for.—Give not the goat fresh herbage :
 " The litter for the Florentine : not the
 " Plant vigorous, if aught be left from that
 " Fine Roman seed to spring up thro' the bed
 " So vile of rubbish, lain now long thick spread
 " Upon the soil, choking its comely growth."

To him then I : " Had but my will been fate,
 " Still within the range of human converse
 " We would have held thee. For in my mem'ry
 " And in my heart is deeply grav'd, thy mild
 " Benignant image ; thy paternal care
 " Day after day that drew me on to learn
 " Science divine, how immortality
 " Were gain'd. For this, while life be left with me,
 " Will I, in themes of gratitude, thy praise
 " Proclaim. These warnings,* and those lately heard,

* Warnings lately heard. See Canto X. the warnings from
 FARINATA.

" Shall be set down, and all to Her reveal'd,
 " Celestial maid ! if ever favor'd I
 " To stand in her blest presence !—Note me well,
 " Whatever fate approach me, firm I stand,
 " Conscience unsullied, to receive the blow !
 " Not new to me these bodings. Fortune may
 " Roll where'er she will her wheel precarious,
 " Content am I. Be mattocks still for clowns."

MY MASTER turning to me then, with look
 Profound, thus spake : " Who notes, when list'ning, gains."

Still with BRUNETTO, I in talk my way
 Pursu'd, inquiring who were here of note.

" Some (replied he) are worthy thy research :
 " But far the most silence had better screen :
 " The catalogue were long. In brief, then know,
 " The same offence degraded all. Here are
 " Great clerks whose learning grac'd their age.—PRISCIA
 " ACCASO'S son, FRANCESCO, here ; and, if

" You wish to hear it, he, the vile, who was

" Translated by the servant's servant from

" Arno's seat to Bocchiglione as there

" Less seen ; where his polluted relicks lie.

" From me no more , nor can I longer with

" Thee journey, for behold upon the sands

" That mist ! Shades there advance with whom I dare

" Hold no communion. Take thee to thy care,

" My Tresor, cherish'd strains, where still I hold

" Choice life. No more do I request of thee."

Then turning, he the burning strand retrac'd,

Swift as across Verona's mead, the swains

Contend for the green vesture—swift as he

Who winner proves of the thrice valu'd prize.



CANTO XVI.

CONTENTS.

The BURNING SANDS continued.

A NOISE of water on the next circle
Falling, now was heard. It echo'd sound like
Buzz of bees. From a band advanc'd to me,
Who thro' a show'r of fire had pass'd, THREE SHADES,
Exclaiming each: "Stop, stop, for by your vest
"You seem of my corrupted country born."
I look'd. The gashes old and fresh gap'd wide
On their scarr'd frame. The mention pains me still.

MY BARD attentive to their cries, thus spake
Me: "Turn: and but the nature of this place,
"And the vast flame that flits around, thou should'st
"Have hasten'd to them—a respect their due."

We stopp'd. They, their roars of pain renewing,
 Whirl'd close to us: and as the champions full
 Equipp'd for the contested field, the ring
 Pace round, arch prelude of attack, so these
 Each following each, in the same circle ran,
 And gaz'd upon us with their eye-balls stretch'd
 In adverse motion to their feet. Suppliant
 ONE spake: "Should you despise us, naked thus,
 "And scarr'd, and scorch'd, and doom'd to tread these sands
 "Loose and combustible, let our renown
 "Your courtesy gain to our requests. Then tell
 "Us who you are that, living, print unhurt
 "The marls of Hell, tho' in ignition steep'd?
 "He who is now preceding me, sad sprite!
 "Flay'd of his skin, on earth great station held.
 "Of chaste GUALDRADA grandson he, but known
 "Better as GUIDO GUERRA,* who high fame
 "Purchas'd by talent and his sword. He, who

* GUIDO GUERRA. A Florentine of the Guelph party.

"Treads upon my foot prints—ALDOBRANDI,*
 "For prudence merited and gain'd high praise.
 "I, RUSTICUCCI† who thro' her (my wife)
 "Of temper uncontroll'd, am here consign'd."

Fear of destruction from the fiery rain,
 And the kind counsel of my sapient GUIDE,
 Me from embracing them withheld. But I
 Thus spake to them: "When this MY GUIDE gave me
 "To know—here dwells the worth I now behold—
 "Not scorn, compassion lasting swell'd within.
 "I am your countryman. Your talents claim'd
 "On earth and your achievements, high respect:
 "Py me paid cordially. I leave the gall
 "To gather the sweet fruit promis'd by one,
 MY GENIUS, my unerring GUIDE! But first
 Down to the centre must I force my way."

* TEGGHIAGO ALDOBRANDI, of the noble family of the Aldimari.

† JACOBI RUSTICUCCI, a Florentine of opulence.

" As long thy limbs may bear thee ; (said THE SHADE)
 " As fame immortal may be thine, declare
 " If bravery and courtesy still adorn
 " Our city ? Much we fear by the report
 " Of BORSIERE* (here among us wailing) scant
 " Are those virtues now." With tone indignant
 I, in response, thus spake : " O Florentines,
 " Your recent inmates and your riches, late
 " Have bloated you with pride and luxury !"

The quick communion of their eyes bespoke
 They felt how just my words accusative !
 In sad acclaim then spake the THREE : " O thou
 " So happy in response, in phrase so choice,
 " When thou, returning to thy beauteous stars

* GULIELMO BORSIERE, a Florentine, well spoken of by Boccaccio in his Decamerone.

It is to be hoped Dante had good authority for placing these men here.

" From this domain so dark, shall pace in mind
 " With pleasure these dread scenes—to man speak of
 " Us." This utter'd, their motion circular
 They broke ; and, as if pinions bore them, they
 Swift darted onward ; and e'er the time were
 Past for uttering one amen—vanish'd !

MY BARD, desirous to depart, mov'd on,
 I following. Not far had we advanc'd,
 When with a din tremendous, that destroy'd
 All pow'r of voice, and deafen'd, waters roar'd !

That river which from Veso's base steals forth
 A gentle stream, then Aquacheta call'd
 Reflecting from the left the Appenine,
 But in a lower bed at Forli roll'd,
 Where, meriting no longer that mild name,
 To the Levant it hurries on its tide
 So turbulent, that that huge Alp on which
 Is reared the pile where holy Benedict.

A thousand cowls can congregate, echoes
 The clatter of its toiling waves : but that
 A noise less loud than now o'erpower'd us ;
 For the waves tumbled from a rough high rock !

MY FRIEND requiring, I the wily cord
 Untwisted from my waist, with which I aim'd
 The spotted leopard to entrap. This, when
 In many a coil close gather'd, he receiv'd ;
 Then turning to the right, hurl'd it afar
 Into the gulph. Some strange result (in self
 Communion I) from this a sign so strange ;
 And which MY GUIDE so earnestly pursues !
 Unusual caution should be theirs, when they
 With minds in concert act, keen to explore
 The hidden thoughts on passing circumstance !

“ Quick shall spring up (he said) what I desire ;
 “ And what thou pond'rest soon shall strike thine eye.”

What *seems* a lie, tho' truth, a man should shun
If possible, to tell, lest blameless he
Might suffer obloquy. But here can I
Not silence keep. Reader, by this my theme
I swear, so may it long thy praise receive,
That thro' our mirky atmosphere, I saw
Up rising from the lake, a shape that swam
Swiftly towards us, horrible!—It had
The boldest struck with fear! Like one that has
Just clear'd an anchor from a rock sunk in
The sea, returning, climbs the cable with
Alternate grapple of his hands and feet;—
Or like some animal marine wading
The wave, this fiend came hurrying o'er the pool.



CANTO XVII.

CONTENTS.

Allegorical description of **Fraud**.—The punishment of **Usurers** explained by **VIRGIL**.

“ **T**HE Monster (cries MY FRIEND) behold, striding
“ With pointed tail along the marble path !
“ Potent this Fiend to fracture mountains, walls
“ To perforate, and deadly weapons blunt.
“ His name is Fraud ; and mischief (its foul spawn)
“ Throughout the world it scatters as it moves.”

With chest erected, daring front, and tail
Tense, in an horizontal length stretch'd out
Immense, forward the beast-like figure mov'd.
A semblance to the human countenance
Benign it bore ; the serpent all the rest !

Two paws it had with clotted hair profuse ;
 Its back and breast and sides with nodules shone ;
 While o'er its monstrous surface ringlets glow'd,
 In color brighter than the Tartars shew,
 Or Turkish vestment, or Arachne's web.

Observe some bark when moor'd, whose prow rotund
 And lofty *grounds*, the rest to the thin stern
 Far out with gentle undulation *floats* ;
 Or mark the beaver rav'nous watch its prey,
 Upon the strand where greedy Germans dwell :—
 Like these the Monster press'd the marble brink ;
 Its sturdy tail attenuating far,
 Buoyant with many a bulky curve, wav'd slow
 Upon the air, and with its point erect,
 That, like the scorpion's, was with venom charg'd.

“ We must approach the beast,” (declar'd MY FRIEND).
 When, to avoid the fiery shower and sands
 Effusing suffocating fumes and scorch,

Onward some paces to the right we went,
 And then descended to the CIRCLE's brink.
 Now near him, I beheld far on the sands
 Beyond the rugged precipice, seated
 Some shades. "Observe (MY BARD continued) close
 " Their dread employ : be short your stay, the while
 " Will I solicit the perfidious beast,
 " That his vast back may bear us on our way."

Alone upon the SEVENTH CIRCLE's* edge
 I stood, and view'd a melancholy crew.
 From all, the scalding tear gush'd copious ! Some
 Their parch'd hands uplifting wav'd them around
 In vain to ventilate the fluent heat.
 While others stooping strove their feet to guard
 From the combustion on the ground. Thus oft
 Have been observ'd on torrid days, the dog

* Seventh circle. That is, four regions before they entered the city of Dis, and two afterwards.

In endless labour with his teeth and claws
 To dislodge insects, that in buzzing swarms
 Sting and fly off, and quick return again
 To sting. Long gaz'd I stedfastly on whom
 The fiery torrent fell; but strangers all.
 Down from the neck of each a budget* hung,
 Displaying dyes and figures various, which
 They, delighted, look'd on. One of them—Or
 Was with a lion† azure charg'd; and one
 On gules displayed a goose proper;‡ but he
 Who argent bore azure a fatten'd swine,§
 Thus spake to me: "Why here in this vile place?
 "Depart on earth with speed, since yet alive:
 "And be assured that here upon my left
 "VITALIANO|| will (my neighbour once)

* A budget or purse. Emblematical of the Usurer.

† "Or—was with a lion." The arms of the Gianfigliuzzi.

‡ "Gules a goose proper." The arms of the Ubriachi of Florence.

§ Azure a fatten'd swine. The arms of the Scrovigni of Padua.

|| Vitaliano del Dente, a Paduan.

" Be sent. Since known a Paduan I, in vaunt
 " These Florentines stun me with the cries of,
 " Come now your sov'reign cavalier,* who bears
 " Three goats!" Then, as in scorn, his length of tongue
 He loll'd; disgusting as the heated ox
 His, curl'd and clammy, up his nostril thrusts.

I turn'd on him; and, fearing lest MY FRIEND
 Were waiting my return protracted, sped.

Astride upon the hideous beast, MY BARD
 Thus cheering spake to me: " Mount: safely then,
 " May we descend. But, lest a lash from his
 " Tremendous tail may reach thee, sit before."
 As when a wretch with ague trembles to
 The livid nail, so I, with horrid fears.
 Shame rous'd me; and I felt obedience prompt

* "Sov'reign Cavalier." Giovanni Bujamonti of Florence. The most infamous Usurer of his time.

As to a master due. Seated, I tried
 To cry, " Help, or I fall," but the words sunk
 From me. Then my kind FRIEND his arm stretch'd forth
 And bore me firm. " GERVON (he cried) now move :
 " Be your rotations wide, and your descent
 " Gentle, that your new burden safe alight."

As when a vessel quits the port, its prow
 Slides slowly from the shore, the Monster so
 Moves from the marble bank its mighty chest.
 And buoyant now around he turns himself,
 And like an eel his tail extended waves.
 Air all around ; nought but the Monster seen ;
 The motion fleet and novel to the sense—
 Oh mine were horrors yet by man unprov'd !
 Not Phaeton felt them when the reins he threw
 Upon the haunches of the solar team,
 And burnt the Heav'ns, whose ruins still remain !
 Nor Icarus, when high in air he saw
 Melting and rapidly his waxen wings,
 While his sire warn'd him of his erring flight !

Now from below a mighty wind upon
 My cheek beat roughly. On my right I look'd,
 And again trembled, for a vortex there,
 Sent from its jarring waters hideous roars ;
 And lamentations came, and smoke that curl'd
 In volumes large, and op'ning threw out flame.
 Till now unknown how deep was our descent ;
 Tho' slow, how wide his convolutions through
 The thick expanse sweeping his downward way !

Louder and louder now the mingled noise ;
 And more fuliginous and hotter grew
 The gloom ! When like a hawk that long had soar'd
 For lure or bird in vain, fatigu'd wheels slow
 In many a circuit e'er he drops, then far
 From his anger'd master sits—Geryon so
 On the rock's basement rests. We then dismount,
 But scarcely firm our feet, e'er he, dart-like,
 Ascends, and in an instant is unseen.



CANTO XVIII.

CONTENTS.

The entrance into MALEBOLGÈ, being the SECOND CIRCLE within the gates of DIS, divided into gulfs. The first, containing Panders, Seducers, and perjured Lovers : the second, Parasites.

THE depth we had descended, rough with rocks
Of iron hue, was MALEBOLGÈ call'd
In Hell. Its base whereon we stood, when left
By GERYON, a broad plain : in the centre
Gap'd a gulf, dark, deep, capacious : around
It were ten pits like trenches that protect
A castle wall. From each up to this gulf
Were seen, in semblance rude of bridges shewn
From sally-ports, large rocky fragments, as
Perchance there thrown, forming a concrete firm.

I, following MY POET, to the left
 Proceed : when on the right arose new scenes
 Of woe :—tormentors and tormented mix'd
 In hordes, thick as at Rome in jubilee.
 As there, crowds from the castle gate, crowds from
 The dome over the bridge tumultuous rush :
 So ran these wretches, some before and some
 O'ertaking us, with strides immense ;—all scar'd.
 Oh ! what unfeeling lashes from the crews
 Horned, demoniac, sharp-sounding on the
 Sinner's back !—I heard the twang ! The torture
 Terrible ! Such, that the most harden'd here,
 As if with feather'd feet, leap'd from their stand ;
 And, raging, fled, a second stroke to shun.

I, walking on, A WRETCH just scourg'd descried
 That seem'd once known to me. He, better to
 Conceal himself, with stoop and steady eye
 Gaz'd on the ground, and sideling pass'd along.
 MY FRIEND staid kindly, while I follow'd him,

" Say, VENEDICO,* (I exclaim'd) for well
 " Thy visage I remember tho' thus hid,
 " Why art thou scourg'd, so mercilessly scourg'd?

 " Thou com'st, I know it by thy voice so clear,
 " From earth, (THE SPRITE reply'd) whence too I came;
 " And which I once enjoy'd. Why here, now learn.
 " But first, as false all other tales of me
 " Discard. This true, unwilling tho' to tell.
 " To the foul purpose of the marquis I
 " Seduc'd the fair GHISOLA. But now, I
 " Less complain; for bawds, all Bolognese, herd
 " Numerous here, as speak barbaric language
 " Born between Reno and Savana's streams,
 " Nor wondrous this, for how unbounded was
 " Our avarice!" A dæmon then with scourge

* VENEDICO CACCIANIMICO, a Bolognese. GHISOLA was his sister. The Paramour was OBIZZO D'ESTE, noticed in Canto XII.

Lash'd him and cried : " Hence ! bawd ! no women here
 " For hire."—To MY PROTECTOR I return'd.

Upon our right a huge and craggy cleft
 Of rock, falling across, had form'd a bridge,
 Which from the last great circle was the pass.
 Ascending it, MY GUIDE thus said : " Stop here :
 " And those who had o'ertaken us below,
 " Their face now seen, observe as thro' the arch
 " They pass." From this rough bridge we saw the crowd
 Pressing, by lashes flay'd. Unask'd, MY BARD
 Resumes.

" Chief him observe who sheds no tears :
 " Scarce winces. JASON he ; and royal still
 " In port ; in prowess great as on that day
 " MEDEA winning, he, in Colchis, gain'd
 " The golden fleece, and bore to Thessaly,
 " As prizes, both. But for his vicious deed
 " At Lemnos here this punishment endures.
 " When all the Lemnian fair had pitiless

" The males destroy'd, he won, with all the wiles
 " Of love the wiliest of her sex, its queen
 " *HYPsIPHYLE*,* and left the pregnant fair
 " Forlorn. This way his class of sinners go.
 " Here has *MEDEA* full revenge.—But now
 " Enough of this first vale, and inmates dire."

We to a second border of this pit
 Arriv'd, where a small path across had form'd
 Another bridge to the next pit that led.
 With grime and foetid mouldiness the sides
 Thickly were smear'd. It was all filth: the stench
 Intolerable:—it pain'd our nostrils,
 And inflam'd the eye. So deep this pit, that
 Thought was visible, till upon the bridge
 Of rock we stood. Thence we discern'd low down
 A throng in human ordure swamp'd:—some gasp'd;

* *HYPsIPHYLE* concealed her father *THOAS* when the women agreed to kill every male.

Contorted frightfully, were some mutt'ring
 Their anguish low ; while others beat their palms,
 Of these I noted one mark'd with manure
 So thick, that whether clerk or layman, well
 Could not be distinguish'd. " Why regard me
 " More than the rest (he cried) not filthier I
 " Than they ?" " LUCCA'S ALESSIO,* (replied I)
 " You were not thus with clotted hair so foul
 " When last we met. Dry were your locks. ' This change
 " Arrests me thus.' My adulating tongue,
 (Beating in fiercest agony his front,
 He thus rejoin'd :) " that told alike to all,
 " Gross flattery, has plung'd me here." MY GUIDE
 Drew forth my notice to another wretch—
 She was pent round with filthiness, where she
 Would stand, and sometimes lowly crouch.
 Her hair was now dishevell'd, dropping soil ;


* ALESSIO. Of a family in Lucca, called the Interminei.

While her long nails, full charg'd with excrement,
Her visage smear'd and tore. The victims of
Her former charms, with witching art she shew'd,
That not their gifts profusive, but themselves
She valu'd, then gave them mock endearments.
This was a courtesan, and THAIS she.

The scene disgusting us, we pass'd away.




C A N T O X I X.



CONTENTS.

Third Gulf, containing Simonists.



SOUND shall my trumpet now for you SIMON,
Vile sorcerer, and all your followers,
Who in this third pit lie, for that the things
That appertain'd to God, and should have been
Freely to all administer'd, ye dol'd
With souls of avarice for sordid pay.

Upon the next bridge standing, down we look'd,
In this third cavern, to an hideous depth.

In Heav'n, on earth, in these dire realms, how great,
Wisdom supreme, thy skill! how grandly just!

Far down this depth, holes numberless were seen
Pierc'd thro' the livid pavement, like in size
To the baptismal fonts plac'd in St. John's,
My beauteous church, of which I one destroy'd
To save a child from drowning. This, now told,
All other false suspicions to remove.
Thro' each were thrust the limbs of sinners up
To the calf and grip'd them cruelly, that
Scarce found agony full room to writhe: yet,
Still its force restrain'd, their ancles move in
Short vibrations strong as to snap a cord.
Burnt to the bone their feet; and fire along
Their soles, like oil'd combustion, flaming ran.

“ MY TUTOR say, who he whose legs, more than
“ The rest around, with anguish tremble?” “ Him”

(Reply'd MY FRIEND) " you may behold entire.
 " And wilt thou to that bank with me descend,
 " Himself shall fully tell thee all his crimes."

To this then I : " My will is thine, which thou,
 " Before my utterance conveys it, know'st."

From the fourth margin we descended to
 The left ; and passing many a hole narrow
 And long, stopp'd not until MY GUARDIAN me
 Set safely down 'gainst that inclosing him
 Who shew'd such agony extreme. As the
 Confessing priest, call'd by the murderer
 Upon the wheel full-stretch'd, stoops down to hear
 The linger'd whisper from his quiv'ring lip
 To gain one moment more, so I, list'ning,
 Bent my ear low to him, for he was fix'd
 As on a stake revers'd, head downward.
 Then I this said : " If thou hast utt'rance, speak."

Thus he : " If thou art BONIFACE,* then I,
 " By prophecy of ancient date, deceiv'd !
 " So soon art sated with the wealth from all
 " The sainted treas'ries of the church stol'n, and
 " For which alone thou enter'dst its bland porch ?

So unintelligible this to me,
 Aghast I stood, and wav'ring what to say :
 When, bidden by MY BARD. " I am not he."
 At this reply his tortur'd feet were still.
 Then, with a sigh and melancholy tone,
 Spake he : " What would ye ? Would ye know
 " That I,† conforming with my brutal birth,
 " Soon as the sacred mantle clad me, grasp'd,
 " With avaricious energy, huge wealth,

* BONIFACE. Pope Boniface VIII. then alive. He died in 1303.

† " That I." NICHOLAS III. of the Orsini family. DANTE seems to pun on the name. He calls him *figliud dell orsa*—son of a she bear.

- “ And loaded all my cubbish progeny ?
 “ For this, am I in this vile state compress’d.
 “ Others for simony and vices great
 “ As mine, below me in succession, down
 “ To the bottom are, like me, inverted,
 “ Thrust thro’ this hole continuous : but their feet
 “ Not fir’d as mine. Therefore, I hop’d that you
 “ Were BONIFACE, to drive me lower down
 “ And take my stead of fiercer agony.
 “ But from the west* will come a priest than we
 “ By far viler, a pious hypocrite,
 “ Another JASON fam’d in Maccabees.
 “ As to his sov’reign’s will *he* meanly stoop’d,
 “ So *this*, a sycophant, to Gallia’s throne.†
 “ Me, here, and BONIFACE will he succeed.”
-

* “ But from the West.” BERTRAND DE GOT, archbishop of Bourdeaux, afterwards Pope Clement V. He died in 1314.

† Gallia’s throne. Philip IV. of France.

- Bold this my answer utter'd to a pope :
- “ Did mighty treasures from our sacred LORD
- “ On PETER fall when he receiv'd the keys?
- “ ‘ Follow my steps’—the great, the only boon.
- “ Nor gold nor silver from MATHIAS wrung
- “ The good Apostles, him selecting to
- “ Restore the void by guilty JUDAS made.
- “ Stay there : well-merited thy pains : thy pride
- “ Of wealth ill gain'd rais'd against CHARLES* thy rage.
- “ But that thine holy functions when above
- “ So reverenc'd, holds from my tongue its due—
- “ Or I could tell, how wide oppression strode,
- “ Driv'n by thine avarice ! how virtue groan'd !
- “ How vice rais'd, dominant, its baneful head !
- “ It was to thee th' Evangelist referr'd,
- “ When he prophetic spake of Her who sat
- “ On many waters, and the harlot play'd
- “ With all its kings. While to her husband true,

* Charles I. king of Sicily.

" How grand with her ten horns and seven heads !
 " Some have from gold and silver wrought out gods ;
 " You have invented worse idolatries,
 " More numerous. Ah, CONSTANTINE !* not thy
 " Conversion, but thy splendid gift to thy
 " First rich Successor prov'd, parent of ill."

Rage rioted within him ; and his feet
 Flutt'ring anew, the pangs of guilt confess'd.
 MY MASTER, with complacent aspect, stood
 Silent, as pleas'd to hear my strong rebuke :
 Then bore me to his breast ; and up the steep,
 Craggy, and footless to the mountain-goat,
 Rose with me until safely plac'd on the
 Fourth bridge.—Below was sunk another vale.

* CONSTANTINE. Alluding to the grant of the LATERAN to SYLV-
 vester.

C A N T O XX.

CONTENTS.

Fourth Gulf, containing Sorcerers, &c.

MY strain (the twentieth) of new punishment
Shall tell, borne in the vale below :—Our bridge
Commanded all the melancholy scene.

With eyes that stream'd down anguish, moving slow,
We saw, shades in processions long, like those
That in the churches chaunt the litany.
Strange objects ! for their heads, revers'd, display'd
The face behind. Thus backward did they tread,
When, summon'd by their eyes, they would advance.
Conjecture first to palsy gave the cause.

Erroneous this. But, reader, (so may'st thou
 Profit by the sorry tale) without grief
 Could I survey our image thus! Hot tears
 Rolling incessant down their backs! The sight
 Was so oppressive, that against the rock
 I sunk subdu'd. "Mere weakness this is," cried
 MY GUIDE, rebuking me:—"For vicious they
 "Who, by compassion, thus ill plac'd, confess,
 "Of the correct decrees of God, mistrust.

"Arise! behold AMPHIARAUS,* for whom
 "Gap'd wide the Theban ground; when, while falling—
 "'Stop, (his comrades cried) why quit thus the field?'
 "But headlong he kept falling until near
 "Where MINOS reigns, whose portals none can pass
 "Unjudg'd. He, here condemn'd him with his head
 "Thus plac'd backward to look, for, that on earth

* AMPHIARAUS, stated to have been swallowed up by an opening of the earth.

" Pretended he far forward to descry
 " Man's doom. TIRESIAS next, who from a man
 " His form to woman chang'd : but striking the
 " Two twisted serpents, manhood gain'd again.
 " This ARUNS, who low down 'mongst LUNI's rocks,
 " Dug by CARRARA's husbandmen, dwelt in
 " A den, surveying thence the passing stars :
 " But now transvers'd down to his lower limbs.
 " Mark her, whose hairs dishevell'd hang and lank
 " Over her bosom, graceful once that flow'd
 " Down her fair shoulders. MANTO was her name.

" Give now attention to her history.
 " She clos'd her wand'rings on my native ground.
 " Her father dead, and Bacchus' town enslav'd,
 " Long was she a vagrant upon the world.
 " Those noble Alps cutting the Tyrollese
 " From Germany, sit near a spacious lake,
 " Benacus call'd, swell'd by ten thousand springs
 " From Guada pour'd and Valdimonica.

“ Here at its lower verge rises a town
 “ (Where might his court’sies give the Brescian priest,
 “ When passing thence, to him of Trent and of
 “ Verona)—Peschiera, fortress gaunt
 “ Guarding from BRESCHIA’s and BERGAMA’s hosts,
 “ Its sons. More than Benacus can retain
 “ Flows out and rolls the Mincio thro’ the meads
 “ Till at Gaverno it supplies the Po.
 “ Ere this, it throwing half its waters off,
 “ Moves lazily and spreads a marsh, whose fumes
 “ Noxious, the torrid suns receive. In its
 “ Centre plac’d, rises a spot unpeopled,
 “ Desolate. Here the wilder’d virgin and
 “ Her followers stop :—a meet abode
 “ For such as shun man’s converse practising,
 “ As she, vile sorceries. At length, her soul
 “ Releas’d, over her relics, in this isle
 “ Entomb’d, her friends, grateful, a city raise,
 “ Guarded by nature with a girt of slough,
 “ And nam’d it MANTUA, hon’ring thus the Maid.

" A town well peopled till CASALODI*
 " Was by PINAMONTE wrong'd. This alone
 " In truth my country's origin. If aught
 " Be told thee differing, withhold belief."

" So lucid, MASTER, is thy lore, others
 " To thine, like embers, dim. But say, (which me
 " Most interests) who here are known to thee?"

Then he: "The one, down whose brown shoulders spreads
 " That venerable beard, EURIPILUS,
 " Who, when the streets of Greece were clear'd of males,
 " Leaving at home but cradled infants for
 " Her future wars, foretold with CALCHAS when
 " From Aulis should her armament unmoor.
 " Of this, as you well know, my Poem tells."

* ALBERTO DA CASALODI who, in possession of Mantua, was persuaded by PINAMONTE BUONACOSSÌ to banish to their castles all the nobles that were inimical to him, which, when done, PINAMONTE, at the head of the populace, drove out CASALODI and usurped the sovereignty for himself.

" That shade so lank was MICHAEL SCOTTO ;* he—
 " GUIDO RONATTI :† both for magic tricks
 " Noted. " ASDENTE‡ there, who his vile craft,
 " With end and awl, again would gladly ply,
 " In change for this sad state. These, all around
 " Wizards and witches, who the shuttle scorn'd,
 " The distaff and the needle's useful toil,
 " For sorceries and incantations fell,
 " And charms and cheating herbs and images."

" But now proceed, for with his thorny load,
 " Cain dips, between the hemispheres, the sea
 " Near Seville's tow'rs. You well must recollect,
 " That yesternight completed was the orb,
 " For in the gloom of that thick wood, her rays
 " How useful !" He ended. Onward we mov'd.

* MICHAEL SCOTT of Balwearie, famed in Scotland as a magician.

† GUIDO RONATTI, an astrologer of Forli.

‡ ASDENTE, a shoemaker of Parma, who became an astrologer.

CANTO XXI.

CONTENTS.

Fifth Gulf, containing State Simonists.

IN MALEBOLGÈ we, from bridge to bridge
Pacing, thus converse held ; and more, of what
Here bootless to narrate. A fifth gulf, now,
From a high cleft we view'd, more dark, more deep
Than all ; and throwing up vain plaints and dire.

At Venice in the winter lie, crowding
Her naval yard, the damag'd vessels. There
The lusty artisans toil at the leak,
The fractur'd prow, and poop ; or smooth the oar,
Or cables twist, or shatter'd canvass in

The fore or mizzen mend. As, lab'ring thus,
 The crews envelop'd stand in dingy smoke,
 From many a cauldron curl'd, of boiling pitch,
 Scenting far round the air : so, in this place,
 The stench amaz'd our senses, of the fume
 From volumes turbulent thrown up, that in
 Their way swelling, lodge in the rugged clefts
 Noisome and sooty crusts. This vapour foul
 Issu'd opaque from the deep gulf below,
 Full to the brim of pitch : while fires divine
 Rolling beneath it, rais'd its black contents
 To ebullition riotous. We, from
 Our distant stand, when ought were visible,
 Descried huge bubbles heaving high their broad
 Concaves ; which, sinking down upon the mass
 Of this infernal fusion, quick subside.

“ Beware ! beware ! ” sudden MY GUIDE exclaim'd,
 And hail'd me to him. I, with deep intent
 Upon the nether scene, leering around,

Mov'd not awhile, like him stagnating fear
 Arrests, when too the cause for flight not yet
 Discernible. Lo! now to me advanc'd,
 With wing out-stretch'd to aid the swiftness of
 His bounding steps, over the splinter'd rocks,
 A DEVIL, black, but blacker now become
 With rage and hell-fraught cruelty. Across
 His shoulder lifted high, triumphant he
 A SINNER swung, and tight his ancles grip'd :
 Saying, with horrid hail : " Ye fanged imps
 " That guard this bridge, here take an elder* from
 " ST. ZITA brought, and plunge him, while for more
 " To the same city I with joy return†
 " Where, save BONTURO,‡ all bribe sordidly ;

* SANTA ZITA'S Elder. A magistrate of Lucca.

† The feelings of DANTE are sometimes, as for instance in the case of Nicholas III. in Canto XIX. too nearly resembling these uttered by a devil. How easily and how frequently do the worthy leap the bounds of charity!

‡ This is said ironically.

“ And where for gold are solemn votes revers’d.”
 Down then he headlong hurl’d him :—and, with speed,
 Swifter than mastiff loosen’d from his chain
 Pursues a thief, over the crags he tripp’d.
 Deep in the boiling pool the sinner dash’d,
 But, buoyant, quickly rose, all writhing on the scum,
 Whom thus the DEVILS round with taunt address’d.
 “ The hallow’d portrait* saves not here ; nor can
 “ Ye here as in the Serchio,† once your wont,
 “ Bathe for refreshment :—but down low dive ye.”
 Then, as the scullions ready stand with forks
 To thrust the floating viands boiling up
 Beyond the surface in the cauldron : so
 These DÆMONS with their thousand prongs pierce this
 Sad WRETCH when o’er the simm’ring scum he rose :
 Their mirth malignant, they continuing thus :
 “ Dance if ye will, but be it friend below.”

* The portrait of JESUS CHRIST, worshipped at Lucca.

† The river at Lucca.

To me MY GUARDIAN : “ Seek some crevic’d rock :
 “ There hide thee. But for me, accustom’d to
 “ These frays, fear nought.” He then crossing the bridge,
 Reach’d the sixth bank, and front of prowess shew’d.
 For now, with all the fierceness that a dog
 Flies on a tatter’d beggar craving alms,
 These DEVILS from beneath the bridge rush’d forth,
 And, wild with wonton ire, lev’ling their prongs,
 Had pierc’d MY FRIEND—but he first spake them thus :

“ Chuse, ere you seize me as your prize, chuse one
 “ Whom I can treat with.” “ MALACODA !” they
 With votive tumult roar’d, and staid their rage.

Then MALACODA from the throng strode forth,
 Saying : “ Weak this parley.” To which MY FRIEND :
 “ Since known to me his cruel pow’rs, his guile,
 “ Thinks MALACODA, that by will divine
 “ Unsent, unsanction’d by auspicious Fate,

“ His rage I here would brave ! On I must pass,
 “ For thro’ these realms another guest I guide.”

Stung by defeated pride the dæmon dropp’d
 His pike gigantic, mutt’ring as he turn’d
 To those around him : “ Our resistance vain.”

“ From thy concealment,” said MY GUARDIAN loud,—
 My craggy screen I quit. As issu’d once
 CAPRONA’s garrison, a treacherous foe,
 That fear’d, so I with terror mov’d, while ranks,
 Thick set of DEVILS, stood athwart my way
 Boding their pact ruptur’d : but I with speed
 MY GUARDIAN reach’d, and to his side close cring’d.

Onward we went, nor dar’d I look around,
 But heard with dread an IMP behind me say :
 “ This prong, shall I now thrust it in his haunch ?”
 “ Ay,” (said the CREW, with hellish glee) “ prick deep.”

That FIEND, who with MY GUIDE held converse, turn'd
 Quickly around, and them rebuking, cried,
 " SCARMIGLIONE, cease :"—turning to us,
 " This way no further move : the bridge is down,
 " And all its fragments in the depth have lain
 " From yesterday* (later than now five hours)
 " Twelve centuries and years add sixty-six.
 " You in advancing must along this ridge
 " Proceed, where will another rock a pass
 " Afford. These scouts of mine sent there to drive
 " The vagrant culprits down the seething gulf,
 " Will be your guide : no treach'ry from them fear."

He then aloud : " Hither, ALICHINO,
 " And CALCABRINA and CAGNAZZO come :
 " Come, BARBARICCIA, chieftain of the ten, with
 " LIBICOCCO, renown'd DRAGHINAZZO,
 " CIRIATTO gaunt with tusks, and the fell

* From yesterday. Good Friday.

“ GRAFFIACANE ; you, FARFARELLO, you

“ Too, RABICANTE wild—first careful scour

“ The surface round of this hot pool : then these

“ Guard safely to the bridge that strides the slough.”

“ O, MASTER ! onward what a dreadful scene,

“ And we without a guide ! Let us return,

“ Tho’ known to thee the path ! And if fail not

“ Thy wonted foresight, mark how those DEVILS

“ Gnash their teeth, that so betokens us, with

“ Their dark eye-brows knit, tremendous mischief !”

To this MY GUARDIAN : “ Fear them not—they grin

“ But at the torture of the wretches plung’d

“ In that black mass of hot adhesive pitch.”

The DEVILS, to the left passing the pier,

Between their teeth thrust forth their tongues, and to

Their leader turn’d, awaiting all his sign :—

The sign he gave by sound aloud, most gross.

CANTO XXII.

CONTENTS.

Fifth Gulf, containing State Simonists, continued.

HUGE armies have I seen in thick array,
Move to the steady charge, or rally quick,
Or track the safe retreat ; squadrons of scouts,
O Aretines, have trod your harvests down.
These movements oft have been, and those in jousts
And tournaments, directed all by sound
Of drum and trumpet ; and oft have castle bells
Swung from the turret's roof in signal peal'd.
But neither drum, nor martial trump, nor bell,
Nor instruments of home or foreign forge,
To move thro' evolutions horse or foot,
Or vessel tack'd by sign from earth or heav'n,

Could have more prompt obedience, than was giv'n
To this disgusting signal by the FIENDS.

Onward we mov'd, TEN DÆMONS for our guides.
Odious associates ! but as in churches
Gladly we mix with saints, in taverns we
Are oft constrain'd with sots to congregate.

The seething Cavern drew forth all my cares.
There I beheld above the surface of
The boiling mass, ONE curl his collied back,
As will a dolphin in the troubled sea,
That warns the shipman of the coming storm.
Brief ease : for he, quick as lightning, merged
Again. Like frogs that skirt a stagnant pool,
With but their nostrils visible, I saw
Clusters of SINNERS pierce th' adhesive wave.
Short was their respite : but a moment seen
By BARBARICCIA, low down he thrusts them.
ONE WRETCH that loiter'd, GRAFFICAN (for well
Their names I noted) hitch'd in his clotted

Hair the triple prong, and dragg'd him sprawling
 Upward :—to me he like an otter seem'd.
 “ Now fix your hook,” to RUBICANTE bawl'd
 The cursed crew, “ and flay him.” To MY FRIEND
 Then I. “ Learn who and what his crime who bears
 Such cruelty? My MASTER near him mov'd,
 When to his question thus the suff'rer spake :

“ Navarre* my birth-place : where my Sire his wealth
 “ Wasted. Dying; my mother, poor, me in
 “ A noble family secur'd : From thence
 “ To good THEBALDO's† royal roof, where I
 “ His confidence for damning gold betray'd—
 “ Therefore these insults, this opprobrious pain.”

Then CIRIATO his sharp tusks, boar-like,
 Protruding from his ghastly lip, into

* His name was Ciampolo.

† THEOBALDO. Thibault I. King of Navarre, who died in 1253.

The SUFF'ERER's scalded sides dug savagely ;
 While BARBARICCIA held him in his gripe ;
 And, his arm stretching, with his uprais'd prong,
 Look'd wistful where with best effect to strike :—
 A waste of agony, as when at once,
 Two of the feline race with barbarous skill
 Assail, and leisure rage, one feeble mouse.
 " E'er we still rend him (low'ring as he spoke)
 " What questions more ?" Then to the tortur'd wretch
 MY GUIDE : " Beneath the scalding wave, say, does
 " A Roman lie ?" " One (he replied) that from
 " An island came, bordering on Italy.
 " With him in this infernal fusion this
 " Moment was I low merg'd, that I defi'd
 " The dæmon pow'r from hooks, or prongs, or tusks."
 " Not to be borne," bellow'd LIBBICOCÇO.
 Then with his fork sore rent him in his arm,
 And seiz'd the fragment : when DRAGHINAZZIO
 Would his thighs have snatch'd at, but their fierce CHIEF
 Turn'd angry round, and threat'ning call'd them off.

The riot now had ceas'd. With hasty tone
 MY GUIDE to him, who still most piteously
 Was hov'ring o'er his recent wound, thus spake :

“ Say who was he from you who parted in
 “ A luckless hour, to meet suff'rings like these.”

“ Friar GOMITA* of Gallura, he
 “ (The SHADE replied) for fraud profound long fam'd ;
 “ Who when his master's foes were in his hold,
 “ For bribes set free : In ev'ry other trust
 “ A sov'reign cheat. There MICHAEL ZANCHI writhes,
 “ Of Logodoro chief. *Sardinia* dwells
 “ Unwearied on their tongue. Alas !—behold—
 “ More would I say, but for that dæmon—mark
 “ Him, prompt with grin mischievous to scalp me.”

* Friar GOMITA, made governor of Gallura (one of the four jurisdictions of Sardinia) by Nesio de Visconti.

The CHIEFTAIN then to FARFARELLO turn'd :
 And rolling fierce his hideous eye-balls, as
 To strike, thus said : " Ill-omen'd bird, retire."

" Tuscans or Lombards (cried the frightened SPRITE,
 " Resuming) wouldst thou see, let but these IMPS,
 " So scaring to my friends far off retire,
 " I, by a signal known to reconvene
 " Our straggling friends, will call around me sev'n,
 " Like to myself." CAGNAZZO here uprais'd
 His hideous face : ghastly he sneer'd ; and his
 Head shaking, said : " A specious trick : we gone,
 " Down will he plunge again." " A weak device,
 " (Replied the crafty SPRITE) which on myself
 " Would greater torments raise." No longer now
 Could ALICHINO curb himself : but from
 His COMRADES diff'ring, thus address'd the WRETCH.

" Should you descend, I, not on foot, but will
 " On wing pursue thee o'er the boiling pool.

“ Quit we the hill, and be the bank our screen,

“ Then try against us all thy single skill.”

The close of this strange contest, reader, hear.

He and his crew gaz'd on the other shore ;

The Navarrese the favor'd moment seiz'd.

Striking his foot upon the ground, forward

He rush'd, and darted in the seething pool.

At this escape, so unforeseen, chagrin'd

The DÆMONS stood aghast. ALICHIN most,

As most deceiv'd. Quick on the wing he went

Over the steaming pitch, crying aloud :

“ Now is he caught.” The boast in vain : for low

Beneath th' adhesive scum, merg'd was the SPRITE.

As when a hawk aims at some waterfowl,

That, diving low, leaves but the rav'ning bird

The waves for prey, so where the SPRITE had plung'd,

This DEVIL, disconcerted, poiz'd his wing.

Then CALCABRINA dup'd, with vengeance arm'd,

On ALICHINO sprung, and grappled hard :—
He like a goshawk clung :—fierce was the fray :
Both on the mass fell wrestling, where their wings,
Thick clotted in the fusion glutinous,
Had kept them struggling ever, but their CHIEF,
From those who lin'd the shore to see the strife,
Sent FOUR, who their tremendous pikes crosswise
Over the pool outstretch'd, whereon they clung
Until they reach the bank : but by the scald,
Their skins, to a black crusty surface chang'd.

We both now left them in their painful plight;

CANTO XXIII.

CONTENTS.

The Sixth Gulph, containing Hypocrites.

IN silence we (as journey minor monks)
Behind each other pac'd our lonely way.
The scene we left how similar (like, save
In name) as *now* and *instantly*, to that
By Æsop* fabling sung, where an arch frog
Beguil'd the toad distress'd and credulous!

As thought creation gives to thought, so I,
Now ruminating on the past, foresaw,

* The fable where the frog ferries the toad tied to his back, with a view of drowning him. But both are carried away by a kite.

In strict alliance with it, dreadful ills.
 For cheated and chagrin'd, entangled in
 A contest closing with dismay, and we
 In chief the cause, these DÆMONS, swoll'n with rage,
 Would seek us to disgorge (thus did I bode)
 Fell vengeance, ample as anger can in
 Minds demoniac rankle, and, as a dog
 Mangling a hare long hunted, merciless.

Horror (I felt) had bristled ev'ry hair ;
 And ev'ry step, shorter and slower, shew'd
 How palsyng dread wholly had possess'd me !
 When to MY GUARDIAN I : " Quick, chuse a spot
 " Impervious, and secure from these fierce IMPS,
 " Made fiercer by affront.—Do I not hear
 " Them now behind us, hot in wrathful chase ?"

" Were I a mirror (said MY GUARDIAN) not
 " More clear thy form on it, than seen thy mind.
 " So like are my suspicions, as one soul

" In common ours. If on the right were found
 " A passage to the neighb'ring Gulf, we from
 " Thine apprehended chase would there be screen'd."

These uttered, flying came with wide-spread wing
 The vengeful BAND. When as a mother, that
 From slumber rous'd by crackling sound of fire,
 Sees her dear babe pal'd round by raging flames,
 Danger and pain discarding, bears it off;
 So now MY GUARDIAN seizing me, slid down
 The bank, to that bounding the Gulf below.
 Tho' to him alien, kind as a father
 Me held he secure and close, while he mov'd
 Rapid, tho' smooth, as o'er the limit of
 The pent up waters, sweeps the glassy stream
 That rules below the mill's machinery.

Scarce on the nether bank set down, when far
 Aloft upon the rocky brink we saw

The DÆMONS light :—dreadful to us no more :—
 Their pow'r was clos'd ; by Heav'n there limited.

This Cavern shew'd us, moving round, sore griev'd
 And with funereal step, a varnish'd TRIBE.
 On their huge cape, a cowl, low hanging o'er
 Their eyes, more than those worn by friars of
 Cologne, glittered with thick incrusted gold :
 Inward were plates of lead, weighty and cold :
 To these, light as mere straws, were the thick vests
 By FRED'RICK'S* culprits worn. O how beneath
 This cumb'rous gaudy tire they mov'd oppress'd !
 And this to be endur'd eternally !

We, to the left turning, saw shades who dragg'd,

* The Emperor Frederick II. who punished those who were convicted of High Treason, by casting them, wrapped in lead, into a furnace. Where is Frederick placed by DANTE? In Canto XIII. this wretch is praised !

With their distressing loads, so sluggish on,
 That we at ev'ry step, pacing at ease,
 Behind us left successive sets. Then I
 Thus to MY GUIDE : " Who of much fame here crawl,
 " Distinguish ; and obtain their history."

Then one, the Tuscan tongue that spake, call'd out :
 " Why do you hurry on so rapidly
 " Along this dingy vault ? Stop, and perchance
 " From me may you obtain full knowledge." This
 Heard, we stopp'd. When two behind hard striving
 Came to reach us. Now near, they look'd with scowl,
 And to each other low discours'd they thus :

" By his exterior he no shade. How thus
 " Privileg'd ? and why by this cold weighty cowl,
 " Us loading, unoppress'd ?" Turning to me :
 " Who are ye, deign to tell, that visit in
 " This dreary round us hypocrites ?" Then I :

" This same, my mortal form, its breath first drew

“ In the great city on the Arno rear’d.

“ But tell me who you are ? why suff’ring here ?

“ Why are such torrents gushing down your cheeks ?”

“ These leaden cowls of orange hue, almost

“ To fracture strain and overcharge our frame.

“ We joyous friars were, both Bolognese*

“ I CATALANO nam’d, LOD’RINGO he.

“ Not sole (as was the wont) conjointly we

“ Were call’d to govern, but how ill, the slough

“ Of vice Gardingo† wallows in, proclaims.

“ O wicked friars ye”—I stopp’d—for a
Man crucified my deep attent attracts,
Agoniz’d. His beard trembling, sharp his pangs
Express’d. Him, CATALAN interprets thus.

* Both Bolognese. VIZ. CATALANO DE MALAVOLTI and LODERINO DI LIANDOLO, chosen to govern Florence, one of the Guelph, the other of the Ghibelline, party. This occurred in 1266.

† Gardingo, a part of the city of Florence, inhabited by the Ghibelline party, but destroyed by CATALANO’s and LODERINO’s bad administration.

" He,* One to death, the Pharisees to please,
 " Doom'd. On this Gulf's basement thrown, behold him,
 " Where ev'ry one must, passing, trample on.
 " His father,† too, and others, here writhe for
 " The same high crime, Israel in woe that plung'd."

At these words, in amaze stood VIRGIL, and
 Gazing at the friar, lying there in
 Punishment opprobrious, thus inquir'd he :
 " Is there no passage on the right, thro' which
 " To shun the FIENDS' pursuit ?" The friar these :

" More near than thou could'st hope. Not far remote
 " From the next CIRCLE is a rock, forming
 " A pass from these dread vales. This from the top
 " Is rent, but you can climb the ruin huge,

* " He."—CAIAPHAS.

† ANNAS, father-in-law to CAIAPHAS.

“ For on its side it lies, and in the depth.

“ You will, ascending these, pass safely on.”

“ The FIEND deceiv’d me,” (ruminates THE BARD)

The monk rejoin’d : “ The DEVIL chief in lies,

“ Fam’d in Bologna as throughout the world.”

THESE, by their weights worn down, we quit.—My

GUIDE,

Much angry, forward strode. I following.

C A N T O XXIV.

CONTENTS.

The Seventh Gulph, containing Robbers public and private:

WHEN day more nearly shares with night the hours,
When on the sun's shorn locks Aquarius pours
Streams chilling ; and glitt'ring hoar (snow's image)
Veils the bald earth in dreariness ; the hind,
Shut out from all his muffled fields, strange now
And unendear'd, by sullen whiteness stripp'd
Of ev'ry pressing character, to his
Hut sorrowing returns : but now, soon as
The gelid mask slides off, and the cramp'd ground
As from a trance restor'd, with ready smile,
Joys, conscious of its wonted energies—
The rustic blithe to his suspended toil

Returns ; and his flock, bounding, to the mead :
 So I, the ruffled visage of MY FRIEND
 Me that dismay'd so, cheerful view, soon as
 Again the wonted smile streams over it.
 For now the broken bridge arriv'd at, HE,
 Benign, as at the mountain's foot where first
 We met, me caught, after long pond'ring o'er
 The ruin'd mass, kindly within his arms,
 And to the summit bore me of a rock
 High, beetling, and immense : where, prudent, he
 Made me essay the next, if firm to bear
 Mine and his lighter weight, that he secure
 From rugged cliff to cliff with me his load
 Might climb.—No journey this for those sad shades
 By capes of pond'rous flakes of lead press'd down !

Tremendous were the crags we clambered ! and
 The rough pass, girting Malebolgè's gulf,
 Horrific, dangerous !—To me, not by
 MY GUARDIAN aided, impracticable !

When we the lowest splinter reach'd, I, tir'd
With such unusual toil, sat breathless down.

“ Why thus ? Shake off thy sloth (MY BARD exclaim'd)
“ No fame for him who stretches upon down :
“ And he whose name will not his self survive,
“ Is but a bubble on the stream ; a curl
“ Of smoke that climbs, dilates, then lost.
“ Arise, I say, courage will give thee strength.—
“ Vanquish the first obstruction, vanquish'd all.
“ Forth with thy strength, and to thy duty haste.”
“ On (I replied) courage I feel and strength :”
Then rose ; and, both assuming, follow'd him.

Across the rock abrupt, high, rugged,—slow
We walk'd, and long, and wearily. At length
Upon the summit of the bridge we stood.
Thence, from a Gulf obscure, up growling came
Sounds dire and half articulate :—to me,
Expressing anger and dismay. I por'd

Intense upon the dark opaque. In vain.
 Nought but repelling blackness beat on my
 Eye-balls ; and murmurs labour'd thro' the dense
 Profound. " Let us (beseeching thus MY BARD)
 " Let us descend and to the verge proceed."
 Then he : " Requests by reason tutor'd, claim
 " Concurrence prompt, unprefac'd by the tongue ;
 " Such thine." Then to the Gulf he handed me.

From this eighth bank downward we look'd : there saw
 Serpents innumerable ; and of form
 In ev'ry gaunt variety, which but
 Remember'd quail. Not Lybia's banks strew out,
 Nor Jaculus, Pareas, Chelyder,
 Cenchris and Amphisboena, teeming foul,
 Their vip'rous hordes, so vast ; with fangs, so keen,
 So venomous ! Scarce Æthiopia's shores
 Stream pestilence more terrible ; nor the
 Red sea's distended margin deadlier !

Scar'd at the noxious numbers that this black
 Cavern overspread in slimy tangles
 Intricate, desponding ran the wretches,
 'Or not a refuge for the sinner here ;—
 'Or Heliotrope* with mystic veil that hides.
 Round some a viper clung, or manacled,
 Or tight behind him bandag'd both his arms,
 While their fang'd tongues pierc'd deeply in their loins.

I saw—wondrous ! up darting near our side,
 A monstrous snake assail a SINNER ! When,
 Less than in instant measur'd, with bite
 That spirted venom'd fire—down dropp'd the SPRITE
 To ashes : but as quick he gathered up
 His form again, and stood himself, express !

The phoenix thus (so sages tell) tasting

* Heliotrope. A gem that is fabled to have the power of concealing the bearer.

Nor herb nor corn ; but drops of frankincense
 And juice of amomum, alone its food,
 After a life of full five hundred years,
 Dies, wrapt odoriferous in fumes of
 Myrrh and nard, its winding sheet, but is restor'd
 Quick to another life again. Or as
 One, witless of the cause, by dæmon force
 To earth is struck, and all the man awhile
 Annul'd, soon as the trance slides from him, he,
 But still in all his agony, up starts
 Aghast—the SINNER, now restor'd, so look'd
 Around him, and so felt. Tremendous proof
 How great, O God, thy justice and thy pow'r !

“ Who thou ? ” inquir'd THE BARD. To him the SHADE
 “ From Tuscany my crimes here hurl'd me ; and
 “ Vile Pistoia like a den nurtur'd me
 “ In bestial low debaucheries.” “ Stop him,
 “ And ask of him why here, MY GUIDE ? For well

" I knew him (VANNI* nam'd) a man of wrath
 " And sanguinary." This the SINNER heard,
 Then, while a ready shame his front suffus'd,
 He thus confess'd himself: " That you here meet
 Me, more than my hated death distressing :
 But my foul villanies I must disclose.
 " Know then, that I, with sacrilegious hand,
 " Stole from the sacristy the pious wealth,
 And fix'd on innocence the flagrant charge.
 " That ye shall never from this gulf escape,
 " Joyous at this my state, my bodings hear.

 " First shall Pistoia mourn the NERI† lost,
 " Then a new race, new laws, shall Florence know.

* VANNI FUCCI, an illegitimate offspring of the Lazari in Pistoia.
 He robbed the sacristy of the church of St. Giacope and accused
 VANNI DELLA NONA of the theft, who was executed for it.

† NERI. The BIANCHI in May, 1301, assisted by their friends
 who ruled Florence, drove the Neri out of Pistoia, and destroyed
 their palaces, farms, and habitations.

- “ Mars from the vale of Magra next shall rise,
“ In clouds of fury, with tumultuous speed,
“ Boding to burst somewhere with horrid crash
“ Of tempest ruinous. Soon shall it burst.
“ Piceno’s plain the blasting conflict bears,
“ Where the BIANCHI, all, are swept away.
“ Hear that ; and may it grieve thee :—such my vein.”

CANTO XXV.

CONTENTS.

The Seventh Gulf continued, containing the Sacrilegious and Robbers.

THE THIEF thus ended. Clenching then each hand,
He high to Heav'n uplifted them, and brawl'd—
“ These against thee now in defiance shake.”
At this, and I* was pleas'd to see it, forth
A serpent sprang ; and, as to choke a speech
So blasphemous, whirl'd fiercely round his neck :

* Another instance in which DANTE seems to have lost the line between a disgust against vice and a taste for the infliction of pain. The violent hand even of justice laid upon man, should, by his fellow, be viewed with sorrowing silence.—No exultations—No ejaculations that he was not like this man—“ a publican and a sinner !”

Another intertwin'd his arms, and on
 His back tight pinion'd them.—Such horrid taunts,
 Such dreadful blasphemies in all my
 Doleful journeyings, from the most vengeful
 Never till now heard I—outraging in
 His imprecations him that fell from Thebes.*

PISTOIA, than thine ancestors in all
 More daring, why dost thou not burn thyself?

The SINNER said no more, but sped.—Then came
 Prancing a Centaur, furiously that sought
 Him, crying aloud: ‘Where, where is the wretch?’
 Down from his haunches broad enormous hung,
 Evolving far below their bloated paunch,
 Snakes out-numb’ring those Maremma’s† marshes

* Him that fell from Thebes. CAPANEUS. See Canto XIV.

† Maremma. A vast tract of country near the sea-shore in Tuscany.

Show the glowing sun. Upon his huge back,
 Below the shoulder sat, with its broad wings
 Out-stretch'd, a Dragon of terrific bulk,
 Hurling on all he met destructive fire.

“ He, CACUS* (cried MY MASTER) that at the
 “ Foot of Aventine, unlike his brethren,
 “ Toiling in puny thefts, destroy'd large flocks
 “ And herds of cattle spread upon the meads,
 “ That, like one slaughter-house, o'erflow'd with gore.—
 “ To him the club of Hercules dealt death,
 “ In blows so prodigal, that but a tythe
 “ Of a full hundred giv'n suffic'd his doom.”

Now (this monstrous Centaur far off speeding)
 To us came near—THREE SPIRITS, but to both
 Unknown. ONE of these SPIRITS bawl'd aloud,
 “ Who are you ?”—We our converse stopp'd, list'ning.

* VIRGIL. *Æneid* viii. 193.

“ CIANFA,”* said another, “ where so long
 “ Thy stay ?” —Still stood we mute, eager to hear.

Reader—a change, 'till now unheard-of, hear,—
 To me wondrous, scarce credible, tho' my
 Clear sight confronting. ONE of these SPIRITS
 A serpent darted on ; and to his back,
 As ivy to the rugged trunk, close clung.
 In each his cheeks he fasten'd deep a fang :
 Six members, semblances of feet, clutched him
 About : round his arms two twisted ; two cramp'd
 His body ; two his legs : and his long tail
 Twirl'd round his ancles until both combin'd.
 As shews blanch'd paper various hues, when flame
 Fiercer and fiercer dashes on it, so
 In the next moment on the whole surface
 Of the SPIRIT spreads a change woful,

* CIANFA. Said to have been of the Donati of Florence.

That e'en his comrades loud exclaim'd: "How this,
 "AGNOLO!* thou not two nor one?"——Now quick
 The heads unite, the bodies join, the arms,
 The legs: which are transform'd to members such
 As eye of man never till then beheld.—
 Serpent not wholly, wholly not himself:
 Mysterious intermixture now! awful,
 Disgusting, grim! Thus, monster, stalk'd he on.

As on a torrid day, a lizard from
 His bank crawls forth a fiery length across
 The trav'ller's path, a serpent now, livid
 And black commix'd, ignition all within,
 On the two unchang'd SPRITES advancing, sprang
 Upon one of them, and on the navel
 Struck him that he fell. The victim spake not,
 But with gloomy eye gaz'd on the serpent,

* AGNOLO BRUNELLESCHI. A Ghibelline.

Steadily ; he on him : then ghastly yawn'd,
As if by sleep or fever first assail'd.

Again thy credence, reader, must I strain.—
Of wonders LUCAN sung,—SABELLUS chang'd ;
NISIDIUS too.—Into a serpent's frame
OVID cast CADMUS ; ARETHUSA he
Dissolv'd ; and pour'd her polish'd form a stream
Bland and resplendent as her wonted self.
I can display a marvel yet unsung :—
A transubstantiation, face to face,
In the minutest member counterchang'd.
First from the SERPENT's jaw forth vomits smoke,
And from the wound of the FELL'D SPIRIT gush'd
Another volume : mounting, both combin'd.
The SERPENT's tail these sep'rates, and to legs
The parts transmute ; the SPIRIT's, blended, form
A tail: the soft and sleeky skin of man
The REPTILE wears ; his, rugged, stiff, the SPRITE :
His arms he quick fore-shorten'd, to become

No longer arms, but fins ; and those stuck to
 The crest of the PRONE ANIMAL, push forth,
 And shew in easy swing two perfect arms :
 The locks that copious grac'd the SPIRIT's front
 Slide off ; while ringlets round the SERPENT's ears
 Curl thick, whose taper jaws distend to the
 Plump cheek, and snout to nostrils highly arch'd,
 Grand, aquiline. His thin blue lips project
 In bland vermillion ; his tongue, prong'd doubly
 Late, and spirting fire, now, single, boldly
 Articulates. Those members on the SPRITE
 Receive the reptile form : his well-turn'd ears,
 As will the fearful snails their horns, close in.
 Each still retain their eyes ; save them alone,
 To the new form was ev'ry feature turn'd.
 The counter-change complete, lo ! He who bore
 God's image, crawls ! and a vile worm, the port
 Erect of man majestic, arrogates !

The smoke was now dispers'd, when hissing as

He went, off crept the wonted SPRITE, at whom
 The MIMIC MAN deriding spat, and to
 His comrades turning, spleenful thus he spake :
 “ As I, BUSO,* now go crawl the ground.”

This seventh gulf we found possess'd the pow'r
 Of transformation ! Novel was the scene,
 As might give pardon to an erring tongue !
 But, though it scar'd, and in amazement struck
 Me, well could I discern SCIANCATO† there.
 He only of the THREE remain'd unchang'd.
 The hissing crawler's‡ fate still GAVILLE§ rues.

* BUSO, of the Donati family. A Ghibelline.

† SCIANCATO. A robber, whose family is unknown.

‡ FRANCISCO GUERCHIO CAVALCANTE. A Ghibelline. The particular crimes of these four seem to be unknown.

§ Gaville, near Florence.

CANTO XXVI.

CONTENTS.

The Eighth Gulf, containing Men of Talents, perverting them by deceit and perfidy.

FLORENCE, rejoice ! Thy fame not lands nor seas
Have limited :—its wings e'en flap o'er hell,
For there, three of thy citizens, prime thieves,
To me (thy son) so vexing, fruitless dwell !

But if the presage * of a morning dream
Illude me not, thy doom, long merited,

* But if the presage, &c. Alluding to the fall of a wooden bridge over the Arno, when many lives were lost ; and a fire that destroyed 1700 buildings.

And long by all the states around implor'd
 (By PRATO too) will overtake thee ; and
 Since it must, may the dire blow be speedy,
 Lest in mine aged hours it grieve me more !

Up the steep crags that led from the gulf's depth,
 Kindly MY GUIDE me reconducted : but
 Among the splinters of the rocks above
 We, both clamb'ring with hands and feet, strove long.

How lamentable this past scene ! And how
 (Reflecting on it) does my duty urge
 My tongue to be by verity restrain'd.
 Fearful my genius (if of value) lure,
 By wild uncurb'd imaginings, to crime !

As when the husbandman upon a slope,
 Listless at eve reclining, while the bee,
 Ceasing to buzz, resigns the air, now meek,
 To the light flick'ring gnat, sees numberless,

Low in the darkling vale, or plain, or in
 The vineyard where he labor'd, brilliant drops
 Of fire, the glow-worm's pride : or as the good
 ELISHA rapt near holy Jordan's bank,
 Gazing at Him (a prophet favor'd high
 By God, and to whose pow'rs the heir became)
 ELIJAH blest, in blaze ethereal merg'd,
 Whirling his rapid way to Heav'n, sees soon,
 With dread amaze, the brilliant miracle
 High imminent, but as a lucid speck :
 So I, from my exalted stand, beheld,
 Deep in the black abyss, bubbles of flame,
 By thousands gushing from the fumy dale.

Each cloth'd a SINNER, and conceal'd its charge.
 Upon the bridge I stood ; and so profound
 Was my attent, that but for clinging on
 A rock, to quick destruction had I fall'n.
 MY GUIDE confirming my conjectures sad,
 On what those bubbles might contain, thus spake :

“ Within each flame, by distance hence express’d,
 “ Minute, a culprit ever burning, dwells.

“ Who in that flame divided in its spire,
 “ Like the funereal pile ETEOCLES
 “ And POLYNICES bore ? MY TUTOR, tell.”

“ ULYSSES there (he said) and DIOMEDE
 “ Together burn, as they together rag’d,
 “ To level Troy. The wily chieftains there
 “ Lament their guile, that by th’ infernal horse
 “ The doughty town was ravag’d ; and to a
 “ Foreign shore the good ÆNEAS exil’d.
 “ Lament the cunning DEIDAMIA’s cheeks
 “ That caus’d to stream for lost ACHILLES, and
 “ There reproach themselves of the gross pilfer
 “ Of Palladium, Troy’s silent sacred guard.’

“ O that I could speak with them !” Thus earnest
 I exclaim’d. “ Say,” MY GUIDE :—“ immur’d in fire,

" Can sound invade their auricles ?—can speech
 " Be theirs? The conscious flame advancing, how
 " My desire swells!" MY GUARDIAN then: " I plaud
 " Your vehemence. But silence hold, for they,
 " Proud Greeks, with you might not commune." Then he
 (The coupled SPIRITS to a spot far more meet
 For converse now arriv'd) address'd them thus:

" If thro' my verse, your deeds that celebrate,
 " From you I merit aught—disclose your death."
 The loftier flame, as if a mighty wind
 Beat on it, flar'd: then murm'ring, utter'd these:

" After twelve months on CIRCE's witching shores
 " (Since by ÆNEAS, GAETA nam'd) detain'd
 " A prisoner, my ITHACA* I gain'd.

" There not my fondness for my noble son,

" My duties to my venerable sire,
 " Nor my affections and vast gratitude
 " For my PENELOPE, retain'd me long.

" A wish, of restless force, the distant wave
 " To dare, for shores unknown where various man
 " Shews mind and manners new, drove me from home.

" A crew of shipmen skilful mann'd my bark—
 " A faithful crew, that to my int'rests clave.
 " With them to the mid ocean first we steer'd.
 " Sardinia's isle we coasted; then we made
 " Those other isles far wide dispers'd, beetling
 " That rose proudly above the stormiest wave.
 " We next saw Spain's grand coast, Morocco's shores ;
 " Our right shew'd Seville's tow'rs ; Ceuta's our left.

" At length were seen,* what boldest mariners

* At length were seen. Streights of Gibraltar.

" As yet beholding, back'd their sail, nor dar'd
 " Farther to venture,—Abyla, Calpé,
 " Pillars by mighty HERCULES uprear'd,
 " Standing stupendous !—Staggard was my crew.

" Myself and faithful band had now grown old.
 " Yet I, the moment critical, thus spake :

" ' Brethren in perils, shall the thousands past,
 " Gaining this western sea, discourage us
 " The remnant few to brave, we who both bold
 " And curious bent our sail with other hopes
 " Than to return in dastard ignorance ?
 " Let us the glorious sun pursue to lands
 " Unpeopled yet. Our mighty origin
 " Uphold : we are not here, like brutes merely
 " To breathe. A virtuous knowledge is our goal.'

" This heard, there was not one of them but plied
 " With double force their oar, that sent our keel

" Far upon the western water flying :
 " To us a woful flight.—Night now came on.
 " The constellations of th' Antarctic pole
 " Glitter'd on ev'ry wave our prow drove down ;
 " Those of the Arctic scarce th' horizon clear'd.
 " Our course still southward, we, for five long moons
 " (Ocean and Heav'n's expanse our only guests)
 " Steer'd on : when far a-head my crew descried
 " A mountain's top* wrapt round in misty brown.

" To view the vast majestic stranger joy'd
 " Us all. Alas, we joy'd not long ! A wind
 " Came rioting off land that struck our prow,
 " Plunging beneath the mounting surge the stern.
 " Thrice this. When now black storm surrounded us
 " And overwhelm'd the ship. Judgment and strength
 " Avail'd us nothing now. The hull, a wreck,
 " Upset ; and the deep ocean buried us."

* A mountain's top. Purgatory.

C A N T O XXVII.

CONTENTS.

The Eighth Gulf continued.

THE CHIEFTAIN ceas'd : the flame assum'd its pyre ;
Then, licens'd by my poet, pass'd away.

ANOTHER came, from whose aspiring point
Rush'd sound confus'd. As the Sicilian bull*
Lo bellow'd forth its cruel framer's pangs,
(Just doom !) as that the brass seem'd conscious of
The pain : so thro' the flame a dismal sound

* Sicilian bull. An engine of torture, invented by Perillus for the tyrant Phalaris.

Was sent, until its passage reach'd : there, from
 The point, which flicker'd as decreed the tongue,
 These utterings, extricated, came distinct.

“ You who the language of the Lombard spake

“ To the pass'd SPIRIT thus : ‘ Away, no more

“ With thee wish we to talk’—tho’ tardily

“ I reach’d ye, feel not this hindrance irksome—

“ Irksome not to me, tho’ I keep burning.

“ If to this nether world of agony

“ You from blest Latium fell—ROMAGNA, say,

“ Does it still war ? From Montefeltro I,

“ Between Urbino and the Tyber’s source.

“ My land with crime I soil’d : thence punish’d thus.”

Stooping, I listen’d still. When thus MY GUIDE :

“ Speak to the Latian.” Readily then I :

“ The bosoms of ROMAGNA’s tyrants still

“ As ever heave with war : but all their strife

“ Conceal’d. Over Ravenna years have roll’d

" And seen no change. POLENTA's* eagle there,
 " With mighty wing, that far as Cervia† shades,
 " Hovers protection mild. The land‡ once strew'd
 " With hosts of Frenchmen slaughter'd, now is grasp'd
 " By the green claw.§ VERRUCHIO's mastiffs, sire
 " And son,|| before whose wrath Montagna¶ fell
 " With wonted havoc, rage. Faenza and
 " Imola now the lion azure** rules,
 " A faithless friend: for ere the summer takes

* POLENTA. Guido Novello da Polenta, who bore an eagle for his coat of arms.

† CERVIA. A small maritime city, a little south of Ravenna.

‡ The land. Forli. In 1282 Guido da Montefeltro, who then governed it, defeated by stratagem the French with great slaughter.

§ Green claw. The lion vert, the coat of arms of Sinibaldo Ordolaffi.

|| Sire and son. Malatesta and his sons, lords of Rimini, named mastiffs of Verruchio from their ferocity. The latter is supposed to be the LANCIOTTO in Canto V.

¶ MONTAGNA DE PARCITATI, leader of the Ghibelline at Rimini, murdered by Malatestino.

** Lion azure. MACHINARDO PAGANO.

“ The season up, will he his party change.

“ As ’twixt the mountain’s brow and Savio’s plain,

“ Cesena* her mid position holds : so ’twixt

“ A tyranny and freedom is she rul’d.”

“ Now unto us thyself reveal, a boon

“ We have from others oft receiv’d, then may

“ On earth (I said) increas’d renown, be thine.”

The flame that screen’d the SPRITE lower’d : then in
Wide oscillations roaring, utter’d these :

“ But that I know from this dread gulf can none

“ Return, silent were I ever : nay, would

“ I cover me in dense and volum’d fire,

“ Till unassailable to sense, e’en that

“ My own could never penetrate, lest to

“ The world were told my unheard of infamy !”

* Cesena. Situated between the steep of the mountain and the level of the plain.

" I was a warrior long ;* then, hoping Heav'n
 " All my misdoings would remit, receiv'd
 " Around my body, as within my soul,
 " The humble cincture of the Cordelier.
 " This hope indulgent Heav'n had realiz'd :
 " But that the chief of priests,† and crimes (for which
 " May all foul curses, as they must, be his !)
 " Sore blasted it. How ! list and ye shall hear :

" Young was the frame in which my mother sent
 " Me to the world, when I in mind a force
 " Display'd less of the lion than the fox.
 " Craft was the tool that built me up in fame.
 " Now when my keel had cut thro' many a sea ;
 " When full the time to lower ev'ry sail,
 " My soul, life's pleasures luring now no more,

* I was a warrior, &c. GUIDO DA MONTEFELTRO.

† Chief of priests. BONIFACE VIII. who, from enmity to the family of Columna, destroyed their houses near the Lateran; and through the advice of GUIDO, got possession of Penestrino, the other seat of that family. He is referred to in Canto XIX.

" Yearn'd for repentance and for holy peace.
 " Wretch that I am, soon came the sad reverse !
 " That prince of the new Pharisees, who wag'd,
 " Furious, a war around the Lateran,
 " Not with the Saracens, no, nor with Jews,
 " But with all Christians, chieftains too blameless
 " Of Acre,* or of Soldan's lawless trade,—
 " Abus'd the functions of beatitude,
 " That holy gift august ! and the coarse cord,
 " My order's lowly badge of penitence
 " Severe, nought reverenc'd, from him so due !

" The good SYLVESTER in Soracte's crags
 " Conceal'd, great CONSTANTINE sought out and crav'd,
 " That he would cure him of his leprosy :
 " So this vile Pope, to cure his fervid pride
 " And fierce ambition, crav'd my guileful aid.

* Acre. The renegade Christians assisting the Saracens in April, 1291, recovered this fortress from the Christians.

His purpose savour'd so of drunkenness,
 That I was silent. He, observing this,
 Thus spake : ' Be PENESTRINO level with
 The earth. The sacred keys I hold : at my
 Command is Heav'n : Hell, at my back, throws wide
 Its gates to take all who dare resist me.
 No absolution theirs. Not lowly I
 As was my predecessor ;* nor inert.'

" At this I yielded : and as I deem'd my
 Silence dangerous, I in answer thus :
 ' Father, then thou wilt cleanse me of my sin !
 Huge promise for a scant performance will
 Secure thy triumph on thy lofty throne.'
 I died. Me, *then* a SHADE, ST. FRANCIS sought ;
 But came a FIEND who, bearing me away,
 Cried : ' He is mine ; his fraud will I repay.
 Since his foul counsel—over him have I

* My predecessor. CELESTINE V.

“ Incessant hover’d, to take him downward,
 “ Where he shall mingle with the wretched crews.
 “ Without repentance absolution fails :—
 “ Sin and repentance never can colleague.
 “ Perhaps (addressing me) ye wotted not
 “ To find me thus in logic an adept.’

“ My ev’ry atom trembled as he mov’d
 “ Downward to Hell with me. ‘ That wretch, be fire
 “ His home,’ scowling, doom’d MINOS, while his tail
 “ Eight times he twisted round his iron ribs.
 “ Here was I brought ; here, ever burning, dwell.”

The flame thus ending, flutter’d, moan’d, and sped.
 Upon the bridge MY GUIDE and I then mov’d
 Across that gulf where tribes more wicked writhe.

C A N T O XXVIII.

CONTENTS.

Ninth Gulf, containing Schismatics, the Seditious, and Murderers.

W_HO, tho' in praise (the theme his intimate)
Amply to any mind the scene could paint,
Plac'd now below us? Tremendous gashes!
Limbs mangled! crowds of mutilated shades!
Pile me the slain that choice Apulia mourn'd;
That stain'd Scamander; all in the long war,
Where rings* (death trophies) gather'd from the field,

* Where rings. MAGO, in the war of HANNIBAL, in Italy, poured before the vestibule of the Senate House, in confirmation of his victories, the rings taken from the dead.

Were heap'd by measures at the senate's porch,
 (This Livy fames); all ROBERT GUISCARD's* foes
 Slaughter'd; add those at Ceperan,† where each
 Apulian trait'rous prov'd, whose bones e'en now
 Are trampled on; the lacerated dead
 That Tagliacozzo's‡ bloody fields deform,
 Which old ALARDO won, unarm'd, by guile—
 By far out-number'd in the gloomy round
 Of this ninth gulf, that heinous aggregate!

Like a vast tun with riven stave dislodg'd,
 A SPIRIT stood before us, with a gash
 Broad, and extending from the throat downwards,

* ROBERT GUISCARD, the Norman, who conquered Naples. He died in 1110.

† Ceperan. The army of MANFREDI, who, through the treachery of the Apulian troops was defeated by CHARLES OF ANJOU, in 1265.

‡ Tagliacozzo. Referring to the victory gained by CHARLES over CONRADIN, in 1268.

Entrails and bowels gushing out, till they,
Against his ancles pending, swept the ground.

He mark'd my harrowing wonder, and thus spake,
While with his hands his breast aside he tore :
“ Mohammed I. He, onwards, howling loud,
“ Ripp'd from the chin upwards, ALI.* The rest
“ Near him, all split—schismatics, therefore split.
“ Behind with flaming sword a DÆMON comes
“ And lashes us with fire. Each cruel gash
“ Soon closes, for fresh strokes severer still
“ To bear. But who art thou aloof sitting,
“ So tardy to receive the punishment
“ Thy trespasses demand ?” To him MY GUIDE :

“ He breathes still, I a shade. My task, him thro’
“ These regions merciless to lead : that he

* ALI. Disciple of MOHAMMED.

“ Might fully know and tell on earth the fate
 “ Crime implicates.” At hearing this, curious,
 Came thousands gath’ring below us : meanwhile
 Their pangs by deep attention were allay’d.

MOHAMMED passing, in conclusion these :

“ When thou the sun revisit’st, warning, tell
 “ DOLCINO* (or will he here be quickly)
 “ Copious provisions in his tents to store,
 “ Lest snows assail him, presage of his death.”

Among the gazing CULPRITS one mov’d near,
 Ripp’d was his throat, the wound his eye-brow reach’d,
 The nose was off, one ear. His windpipe he
 Tore wide asunder, me addressing thus :

“ You uncondemn’d, and whom I (erring not)
 “ In Latium knew, you must remember me,

* DOLCINO. A friar, an impostor, who was burnt in 1307 by the people of Novara in Lombardy.

" PIERRE DE MEDICINA*) on your return
 " To that most beauteous plain† from Vercelli
 " To Marcabò outstretch'd, warn solemnly
 " (If warning can, of what I here foresee,
 " Avail) GUIDO and ANGELO‡ (good men)
 " Of their dire fate, untimely, merciless!
 " Beneath the sea, Cattolica that bounds,
 " Deep will the tyrant with their vessel sink
 " Them! Deed cruel, between Majorca's isle
 " And Cyprus, yet unmatch'd! Unmatch'd by crews
 " Of Greeks, by Pirates feller still:—a deed
 " Neptune had never until then beheld!
 " This one-ey'd traitor (there is a spirit

* Medecina, near Bologna. Peter fomented dissensions among the leaders of the neighbouring states.

† Beauteous plain. Lombardy.

‡ GUIDO DEL CASSERO and ANGIOLELLO DA CAGNANO, two worthy citizens of Fano, invited to an entertainment by MALATESTINO, were treacherously drowned on their passage near Cattolica, between Rimini and Fano.

" Near me, who execrates the day he trod
 " His realm) will lure, guileful, to conference
 " These sons of Fano ; and then so manage
 " With them, that neither vows nor prayers against
 " The danger of Focara's* margin shall
 " They offer more." To him I thus replied :

" Now, wouldst thou that I tell of thee on earth,
 " Say who is he thy sorrows thus excites ?"

The SPRITE his hand upon his cheek-bone plac'd,
 Of one then near him, and stretch'd wide his jaws :
 " Behold the SHADE I spake of (answering he)
 " Now ever mute, for that he boldly urg'd
 " Cæsar, when wav'ring, to his heinous war,
 " And taught the chief,†—that man in arms prepar'd,

* Focara. A mountain from which blew dangerous winds.

† CURIO's speech to CÆSAR. See Lucan's Phars. i. 281.

Tolle moras : semper nocuit differe paratis.

“ Should never hesitate, should ever on.”

How CURIO look'd ! most dreadful ! From the root
His tongue of shameless hardihood torn out !

Then came there near me ONE, with arms uprais'd
(His hands were off) all smear'd with gore that on
His visage spatted blood drops—crying loud :

“ Mark me, MOSCA* am I, who counsell'd that
“ The deed when done was ever done, a deed
“ That spread o'er Florence palls of misery.”

“ Ay (rejoin'd I) and ruin to thy race.”
Increasing agonies o'erwhelm the WRETCH,
And he turn'd from me, madden'd—such his grief !

I, loit'ring with the crowd, a SPECTRE saw,

* MOSCA DEGLI UBERTI counselled BUONDELMONTE's enemies to assassinate him. His death was the prime source of the long contests between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. This happened in 1215.

Which I have scarcely courage to describe,
 So wonderful, so horrid ! And, but a
 Conscience pure like armour guards, how scaring !
 I saw, and think I see it still, a thing
 Headless move onward with the doleful THRONG.
 He by the hair held up a head (his own)
 Which like a lamp illum'd his darksome trunk,
 And was its guide. Two sep'rate beings yet
 But one ! How this, to all inscrutable,
 But to that mighty HIM who governs all !

“ Ah me ! ” came with a hollow moaning from
 The head. Now near the SHADE, the hand lifts up
 The head, and plac'd it to my ear. Then thus :

“ O you, a breathing spirit among shades,
 “ My grievous punishment observe : observe
 “ Round Hell if there be one so dire as mine !
 “ BERTRAND OF BORNIO* I, who, when on earth,

* BERTRAND DE BORN, Vicomte de Hautefort, near Perigueux
 in

- “ Establish’d discord between Sire and Son.
“ Not Absalom against good David rag’d
“ Fiercer, than his dear son against King John.
“ Thence was my heart thus sever’d from my head ;
“ Appropriate punishment, but how severe !”
-

in Gascony, who incited JOHN to rebel against his father, HENRY (II.) of England.

CANTO XXIX.

CONTENTS.

The Tenth Gulf, a Region containing Alchemists, fraudulent Projectors, and Impostors.

VAST were the numbers, various were their wounds——

I would have staid to weep o'er them : but thus

MY BARD exclaim'd : “ Why deeper sorrows here

“ Than felt in ev'ry other gulf yet seen ?

“ The maim'd in torture that this valley holds,

“ Wide many a mile thou canst not number, then

“ Be quick ; our time is limited, the moon,

“ With arch inverted sweeps the nether sky,

“ And we have scenes unheard of still to see.”

Slowly we mov'd, while to MY GUIDE thus I :

" Hadst thou but known the great attraction of
 " That cave, thou wouldst have lent thy will to my
 " Delay :—I there beheld a relative ;—
 " There for his great misdoings saw him writhe."

" Him mourn no more. (MY GUARDIAN in reply)
 " Passing I mark'd him,—he with scowling brow
 " (GERI OF BELLO* nam'd) pointed at thee :
 " Thou then address'd by BERTRAM, Hautefort's lord."

" Untimely was his death (I thus replied)
 " Nor yet by us his family aveng'd :
 " Thence scowl'd he at me ; and my pity thence."

Thus in communion, to the rock we came
 That overlook'd the Cavern, where the light
 A little clearer would have shewn its base.

* GERI DEL BELLO. A kinsman of DANTE's, murdered by one
 of the Sacchetti family.

Of Malebolgè the last cloister this.
 Like flights of arrows multitudinous,
 Thence moanings sped ; and which, like arrows steel'd,
 Sore pierc'd mine ears. They issued from sad hordes
 In myriads huddled, steaming in ev'ry
 Malady. Take at the deathly time that
 Spans Leo to Libra, all that are sick
 In Valdichiana's* hospitals, and in
 The marshes† round, and on Sardinia's isle—
 More here ; and fouler was the choaking stench.

Downward, and to the left the rock we trac'd :
 Then clearly saw the base of this foul Gulf,
 Where God's chief minister infallible,
 The register'd as false, in justice dooms.

* Valdichiana. The valley through which passes the Chiana near Arezzo and Cortona, rendered unwholesome by the heats from the stagnated waters.

† Maremma, near the sea-shore in Tuscany.

I can aver, that here had dire disease
 Strew'd greater heaps of putrid carcasses
 And rotted limbs, than in Egina* lay
 When pestilence swoop'd merciless, that man
 E'en to the stoutest died—all animals—
 The very worm. The land (so Poets sang)
 Forlorn, the seed of ants repeopled soon.

The SINNERS now before us, silently
 We pass'd. Some, by disorder restless, mov'd,
 For the mere sake of motion, sluggishly :
 Some o'er each other sprawl'd, or toss'd about
 With doleful lassitude, groaning aloud.
 For their support leaning on each, as new
 Form'd ware by potters plac'd, we two descried,
 Whose skins, scabs virulent and large and dry,
 Incrusted and conceal'd. Never did groom,
 Impatient of the toil, or when his lord

* Egina. See Ovid Met. book 7.

Waited the task delay'd, curry the steed
 More furiously, than with their nails, as the
 Rough knife the scales of fish, their skins they tore.
 Where as they tore, the itching still return'd :—
 Eternal irritations madden'd them.

“ If (cried MY BARD) there be a Latian here,
 “ So shall he find relief, let him proclaim.”

“ We are both Latians (quick exclaim'd one of
 The listless twain) why question'd thus ?” To him
 MY GUIDE : “ These gulfs him, yet alive, I show.”

They, by a tale so wonderful arous'd,
 Part ; and with feeble effort strive erect
 To stand. Then I, as bidden by MY BARD :

“ So may your mem'ry undiminish'd live
 “ On earth, and under many a coming sun,

" Your families declare, and crimes for which

" You undergo this odious punishment."

" I (of Arezzo) feigning I could teach

" ALBERO of Sienna like DÆDALUS

" To fly, was by the dupe (who, weak of mind,

" Admir'd and yearn'd to gain my skill) destroy'd.

" His father hurl'd me on the flaming pile.

" But not for this was I here plac'd, MINOS,

" Whom never fallacies elude, me doom'd,

" For all my frauds in Alchemy, this Cave,

" Last of the ten." Then to MY BARD thus I :

" Light is Sienna's race. Not France a tribe

" More light, more vain, more frivolous, contains."

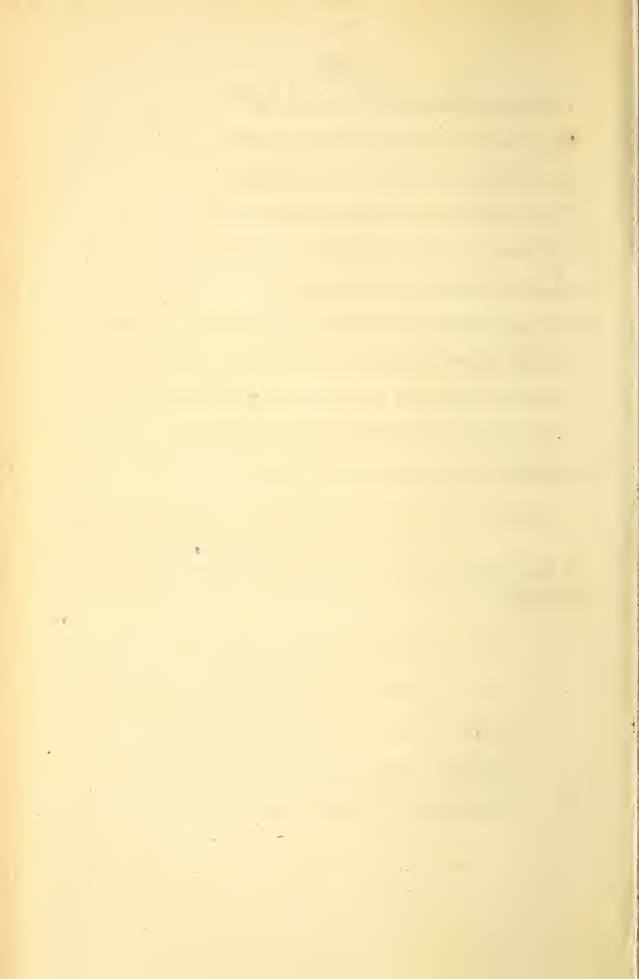
The other leprous SPRITE to this replies :

" From such opprobrium pray be STRICCA* clear'd,

* STRICCA. NICCOLO SALIMBENI, CACCIA OF ASCIANO, and ABBAGLIATO, all prodigals. NICCOLO used cloves in cooking in an unusual way. These persons are here spoken of ironically.

" The frugal STRICCA ; and NICCOLO too,
 " Who knew the culinary pow'rs of spice
 " Best in Sienna ; and spare all that gang,
 " CACCIA's associates rare, his vineyards and
 " His woods profusive that destroy'd. Be spar'd
 " ABBAGLIATO wise, a gen'ral shew
 " So wise ! Wouldst thou now learn who joins with thee
 " Against Sienna thus, near me advance,
 " And thou shalt know me as CAPOCCHIO's shade,
 " Who metals once transmuted, and who strove
 " By subtle Alchemy fresh arts to raise.

* CAPOCCHIO OF SIENNA. DANTE's fellow student in natural philosophy.



CANTO XXX.

CONTENTS.

The Tenth Gulf continued, a Region containing Impostors under fictitious names, and by fictitious tales.

THE rage of jealousy by JUNO nurs'd
Still against SEMELE, her brother struck
(ATHAMAS*); and a maniac rush'd he forth;
His wife and their two sons before him stood.
“ Comrades (the raver cried) along this pass
“ Now spread your nets—there—see—a lioness
“ And both her whelps.” He seiz'd the elder (his
Own dear child, to his sick brain, feline) and

* ATHAMAS. See Ovid Met. book 4.

Against the ground dash'd him to pieces. The
 Mother sped, to meet but a death less dire :
 The wave entomb'd her and her clinging babe.
 When levell'd were the towr's of Troy ; and the
 Good PRIAM robb'd of throne and life, his queen,*
 Seeing POLIXENA lay dead, and on
 His fatal shore her POLYDORUS' shade,
 So deeply griev'd, a change so hideous knew—
 That thro' a canine throat she howl'd her woes.
 But neither this, nor Theban rage beset
 Nor brute, nor man, with such infuriate strife,
 As here a wan and naked SPRITE hunted
 Another, and CAPOCCHIO he. Fierce as a hog
 Excluded from his sty, snarling he ran.
 Deep in CAPOCCHIO's neck he clung his fangs,
 And dragg'd him with his stomach downward on
 The ground. AREZZIO's shade, trembling thus spake :

* His Queen. HECUBA, see Ovid Met. book 13.

" GIANNI SCHICCHI* is that SPRITE, and is

" In random cruelty still mischeivous."

" As thou dost hope (I cried) the other SPRITE

" May not attack thee with his ranc'rous jaw,

" Tell me, ere he escape us, who is he?"

" MYRRHA† (he answer'd) that most wretched soul.

" Who with unholy feelings sought her sire,

" And in another shape her purpose gain'd.

" So by a counterfeit, that OTHER (now

" Onward that passes) to DONATI's traits

" Changing his own, obtain'd by forgery

" Of testament and seal, the beauteous mare."

* GIANNI SCHICCHI. Capable of personating others by gestures and change of features. He was employed by SIMON DONATI to forge a will under the person of BUOSO DONATI, for which he was rewarded by a valuable mare.

† MYRRHA. See Ovid Met. book 10.

These furious SPIRITS gone, around I turn'd,
 To note what others might endure in this
 Dread gulf. One wretch attracts me, like a lute
 In form, if sever'd at the groin his limbs.
 Hydropsy had his paunch distended huge ;
 And of proportions due his visage swept.
 As in an asthma panting, high he curl'd
 His upper lip ; the nether swagging low ;
 And thirst incessant, hottest sear'd his tongue.

“ You, here unpunish'd—why, to me, most strange,
 “ (Thus spake the SHADE) ADAMO's* mis'ry mark.
 “ On earth, enjoyments to repletion, mine
 “ Of ev'ry good. Here, but for one cool drop
 “ I thirst, but thirst in vain. Before my eyes
 “ Streamlets flow ever, clear and cool ; as seen
 “ From Casentino's hills, down thro' the meads
 “ So green, so fresh, sloping by Arno's vale :—

* ADAMO OF BRESCIA, burnt at Romena for coining.

" O how this aggravates my thirst ; my cheeks
 " It parches ; withers all my form ! Thus here,
 " Stern justice goads my fancy to that spot
 " Where I transgress'd—height'ning my agony :—
 " Yes to Romena ; for I there the coin
 " Of Florence forg'd, that doom'd my frame to flames,
 " Could I but ALEXANDER* and his two
 " Brothers here 'mongst the tortur'd find, the sight,
 " Parch'd as I am, I would not barter e'en
 " For Branda's† spring. One is already here
 " (Such the report from some mad SHADES about)
 " But what avails it me ? I cannot move
 " To seek him, I, thus dropsical, thus swoln ;
 " Were I so light that I but one bare inch
 " Could pace within the century, tho' wide
 " This gulf, in circuit many a mile, I would

* ALESSANDRIO, GUIDO and AGHINULFO, who excited him to the crime.

† Branda. A fine spring in Sienna.

" Ere now have tried, amidst this crew foully
 " Distorted, him to reach. They lur'd my crime:
 " The damning coinage, carats base, they taught."

Observing crouch'd beside him, two seething,
 Whence fume exuded, as on chilly morn
 From fresh lav'd hand, I asked the tumid WRETCH
 Their trespasses. In replication he :

" That an accuser false* of JACOB's son
 " Belov'd, JOSEPH the chaste ; and SINON this,
 " The crafty Greek so treacherous to Troy.
 " When hither hurl'd, I found them sitting thus,
 " Their head as now upon their hand : nor have
 " They turn'd, nor strove ; nor can they as I deem,
 " Both squalid in their stench immoveable."

SINON, at this opprobrium anger'd grown,

* Accuser false. Potiphar's wife.

On the reviler's paunch protuberant,
 thrust with tremendous blow his fist hard clench'd,
 That like a drum sounded afar. Him in
 The face ADAMO then hard smote. To which
 The Greek thus tauntingly : " When to the stake
 " Thou, coining wretch, a criminal wert bound,
 " And burning there, not agile thus that arm,
 " But agile, as when once compounding base
 " Alloys." " True, SINON, true," the coiner then
 Replies, " Such truth thou didst not tell when Troy
 " Examin'd thee." " My crime," rejoins the Greek,
 " Stood sole. Thine was repeated oft." To which
 ADAMO : " Thy perj'ry throughout the world
 " Is known, view'd in thy machination vile."
 SINON retorts : " Thy crime thy paunch proclaims,
 " Yet with that mound corrupt parch'd art thou still."
 ADAMO then : " Thy lips not wider gape
 " For water than, as was thy wont on earth,
 " In utterance of ill. No moisture thine
 " To look upon. Thy burning nought allays :

“ Now wouldst thou wish to gulp, couldst thou behold
 “ The lake o’er which raptur’d NARCISSUS gaz’d.”

Thus list’ning to their strife : “ Beware,” in tone
 Of anger, cried MY MASTER. Struck with shame
 I silent stood. And as in dreams which pain,
 We would prolong them hoping better change,
 So I kept silence long. At length, but how
 Unknown, I made confession awkward yet
 Complete. To which, gen’rous, MY FRIEND : “ Prompt were
 “ My pardon for a greater fault. Chase then
 “ Thy grief : and henceforth feel, when chance in scenes
 “ Like this shall plunge thee, I am at thy side. —
 “ Low minds alone give ready heed to strife.”

CANTO XXXI.

CONTENTS.

The Tenth Gulf continued. A region containing Giants punished
for perfidy.

COMFORT, thro' the same lips, pursu'd reproof
So rapidly, that shame and gratitude
Alternate ting'd my cheek. So the fam'd spear*
ACHILLES grasp'd, the legend honors with
The charm to heal the wound itself had giv'n.

Back from the Vale we turn'd, and silent walk'd,
The bank repassing. Solemn was the light,

* Fam'd spear. See OVID Remed. Amor, 47.

What light there was, that lab'ring thro' the dark,
 Scarce gave us pow'r with certainty to move.
 But from a trump a blast, lengthen'd and loud,
 Out bellowing thunder, taught us where to turn !
 Louder and longer was the clangor pour'd
 Than when ORLANDO's horn the murd'rous rout
 Proclaim'd death to the achievements of CHARLEMAGNE.

Raising mine eyes, before them seem'd, and near,
 Huge Tow'rs. "What country this?" Besought I from
 MY BARD: "Thro' such obscurity, and thro'
 "A space so long, mis-sent all objects." (His
 Reply.) "When nearer, thou shalt know how much
 "Distance the sense deludes." He took my hand
 And kindly led me. "But, ere arriv'd, to
 "Lessen thine alarm, know (continu'd he)
 "What seem'd huge Tow'rs are GIANTS, round the Gulf
 "Immers'd, and downward from the navel hid.
 "These God still threatens when his thunders roll."

As fog decreases, clearer grows the sight :
 So as advancing thro' this dense of gloom,
 My errors vanish, but my fears succeed.
 As turrets butting Montereccion's* walls,
 These giants stride the bulwarks of the Gulf.
 Wise and benign was Nature when she staid
 Such terrible creation ! Stinted thence
 The potency of war ! And with man's form
 And agency his evil circumscrib'd !
 But kindly still preserv'd, to 'vantage man,
 The whale prolific, and the elephant !
 These, altho' huge, are innocent, but those
 In mind malign gigantic as in frame !
 Of these, one MONSTER struck my vision most.
 His visage, large and long, seem'd like the pine
 Rear'd on St. Peter's : monstrous all his bones :
 Up from the bank, which, like a vest, conceal'd
 His lower half, to the high shoulder, stretch'd

* Montereccion. A castle near Sienna.

A space ;—three tallest Finlanders, when pil'd
On each, could not have meted such an height.
Out from his hideous lips this shouting came :

“ *Rafel mai amech sabi almi.*”

“ Cease all this blust’ring. (Thus bespoke MY BARD)

“ Keep to thine hideous horn, suspended from

“ That belt enormous swung across thy neck :

“ Thro’ that hoarse tube thy passion vent, and spleen.

“ This NIMROD is (to me MY FRIEND) to whose

“ Wild schemes is due the multitude of tongues.

“ Vain all communion with this gorgon form,

“ To him our speech unknown, his speech to all.”

We therefore turn’d ; and to the left mov’d far.
Here we beheld within the distance of
A cross-bow’s shot, ANOTHER, fiercer still
And more stupendous. One arm (the right) was
Clamp’d behind him : the left, across his breast.
The massy chain that bound them five times, winds
Around his bulky ribs (for half conceal’d,

He, like the other, stood). What force had him
 So huge, so mighty, fetter'd, wonderful !
 " He against Jove himself," MY TUTOR said,
 " Contended.—EPHIALTES is he nam'd.
 " And as those weighty arms rebellion urg'd
 " Of all the giant race with hottest rage,
 " Those arms are pinion'd : he, thence impotent."
 " BRIARIUS would I view ?" To this MY BARD :
 " Far hence is he, like EPHIALTES tight
 " Confin'd, but more enormous, fiercer too.
 " We, ANTÆUS next shall visit : he unbound,
 " And language, still known, utters. His the task,
 " Down to that Pit to lead you where lie whelm'd
 " Of all the wicked tribes the wickedest."

This Giant, when he shook himself, a noise
 Reverberative, loud and terrible
 Educ'd, as when with earthquake thunders roar.
 So shock'd was I, that death had levell'd me,

But that I saw his chains so clamp'd him, he,
Potent in mischief once, was harmless now.

We to ANTÆUS came. From the bank but to
The neck his height extended many an ell.
My GUARDIAN him approaching, thus address'd :

“ Thou, who in that fam'd plain,* where SCIPIO gain'd
“ Eternal honor against HANNIBAL,
“ Huntedst a thousand lions, and whose strength,
“ Had it collegu'd with thy gigantic race
“ Striving against the Godhead, would have brav'd
“ The fight with hope of conquest ; hear my wish,
“ Disdain not to comply with it.—Lead me
“ To COCYRUS : but let us shun TITYRUS
“ And TYRHOX. Stoop ye then, and cease that scowl,
“ For he beside me, still a mundane soul

* Fam'd plain. The country near Carthage.

“ Possessing (long too his, averting all

“ Misfortune!) will on earth thy fame extend.”

AS CARISENDA,* fortress immense and
 Leaning, low'rs when a cloud its dun brow veils :
 So ANTÆUS† shew'd, stooping to reach the BARD.
 In his tremendous palm the BARD he rais'd,
 Who kindly bore me up with him. Down to
 The bottom of the Pit where LUCIFER
 With JUDAS ever dwells engulf'd, with slow
 And gentle drop the Giant lighted us,
 Then rear'd himself, like some huge mast, erect.

* CARISENDA. A leaning tower in Bologna.

† ANTÆUS, who wrestled with HERCULES.



CANTO XXXII.

CONTENTS.

The **THIRD CIRCLE**, surrounded by the Gulfs of the **SECOND CIRCLE**.

A region, called **Caina**, containing **Fatricides** and **Traitors**.

O FOR that gift, a diction grandly rough,
Supernal! Then could I to mortals tell
(Altho' for mortals to attempt unmeet)
Duly terrific, of that Gulf, where all
The bridges tended! For not light the task,
(The sacred Nine must aid me or I fail;
The Nine that aided AMPHION walling Thebes)
The centre of the universe to sing—
The lowest Hell!—and souls of blackest stain!

Ye 'Traitors in this mansion plung'd, how blest
Had ye been born the cattle of the field !

Far was this Gulf below the Giants' feet !
Gazing around, its walls majestic struck
Me with fearful wonder, when a voice, thus :
" Mark how ye move, lest some poor kindred head
" Ye trample on !" Down I then look'd.—A Lake
All ice spread onward, thick as the Austrian
Danube to its deepest bed solid ; or
As Tanais : for had mount Tabernich,*
Or Pietrapana massy,† struck on its
Gelid surface with their weight—vain the blow ;—
Not the least fracture, nor on its edge a
Crack were made. As seen the frogs, with nostrils
Only visible above some pool with
Summer heat stagnant, that croak, while dreams the

* Tabernich. A mountain in Sclavonia.

† Pietrapana. A mountain near Lucca.

Peasant maid her gleaning toil goes on : so
 Stood entomb'd in ice, the head but seen, these
 SINNERS. Their jaws, with noise like storks, clatter'd
 From cold ; their eyes shew'd grief, and the whole face
 Their shame, tho' sedulously mov'd oblique.

Of these two I descried,* adhering to
 Each other, close, that their very hair had
 Intertangled. " Why thus with chest to chest
 " Like one ?" then question'd I. This hearing, they
 Their necks threw back, and shew'd the visage full.
 Tears copious fell ; and as they fell, in ice
 Stuck to their lips, binding their eye-lids down
 Low stretch'd. Altho' compacted they, tight as
 The skill of artizan two planks conjoins,
 Their heads against each other butted, mad

* Two I descried. ALEXANDRIO and NAPOLEAN, sons of ALBERTO ALBERTI, who, being co-heirs, quarrell'd and killed each other in a combat.

With rage. Clipp'd of his ears by cold, a WRETCH,
Down looking, all abash'd, thus question'd me :

“ At them why gaze ye? Them one mother bore ;

“ ALBERT, their father, that rich valley own'd

“ Bisenzio waters their inheritance.”

“ Thro' Caina none are found who merit more

“ Than they, this agonizing pool of ice !

“ Not he whom ARTHUR's* sword sent hither ; not

“ Vile FOCACCIA :† nor he whose head thrust forth

“ From others intercepts my sight, SASOL

“ MASCHERONI.‡ If thou art TUSCAN, well

“ Thou know'st his crime. To stop inquiry learn,

“ I once was CAMICCIONE ;§ and await

* ARTHUR's sword. MORDREC, son of King Arthur : for which see a Romance called *Lancelot du Lac*.

† FOCACCIA DE CANCELLIERI, of Pistoia, whose acts of revenge against his uncle produced the parties of the Bianchi and Neri, or Black and White Factions, in 1300.

‡ SASOL MASCHERONI, of Florence, who murdered his uncle.

§ CAMICCIONE DE POZZI, of Valdarno, who treacherously murdered his kinsman UBERTINO.

“ One of my relatives (CARLINO)* here.

“ My guilt tho’ deep, to his (so deep !) how light !”

Ghastly with cold and gaunt, a thousand heads
(Their bodies lock’d in ice) above the lake
Grinn’d agony ! The mem’ry haunts me still ;
And icy lakes still shiver all my blood.

Slow to the Centre we were sloping on,
Which all of Nature presses to—region
Of rigour, dark and ever cold,
By fate or accident against the head
Of ONE my foot struck hard. “ Why this assault ?”
He cried. “ For MONTAPERTO† vengeful still ?”

I, to MY GUARDIAN turning, him besought

* CARLINO, of the same family, who betrayed the Castle de Piano Travigne, in Vildarno, to the Florentines, in 1302.

† Montaperto. Here the Guelfs were treacherously defeated in 1260.

Patience once more while I, of pressing doubts
 Could be reliev'd by this grim WRETCH. To whom
 Then I: "Who art thou, speak? Who thou (quick he
 "Retorts) that in thy way assail'st with blow
 "Opprobrious ev'ry cheek? Didst thou still breathe,
 "Severe were thy just punishment!" "I still
 "Do breathe. Then answer, for thy fame can I
 "On earth bear up, and there uphold it." "So
 "Will I not tell thee: (said the chagrin'd SPRITE)
 "Conceal'd for ever be my name." Anger'd
 I seiz'd his hair. The WRETCH, roaring with pain,
 Cried out: "Not this, nor torture heighten'd to
 "Its thousandth fold shall from oblivion wrest
 "Me!" The struggle left in my hand his locks.
 He, roaring still, ANOTHER near us cried:
 "What added anguish, Bocca, now excites
 "This bellowing? What devil tortures now?"

"Traitor accurs'd (cried I) dumb still remain,
 "For now I well can shame thee to the world."

"Tell at thy pleasure: and away. (He, fierce,
 Replied.) "But of this prater's crime shouldst thou
 "Escape from us, fail not to blazon. Say,
 "Where sinners writhe in cramping ice, one of
 "The Duera* his punishment receives,
 "For that he took on earth the Frenchman's bribe.
 "If asked, what others his associates, name
 "BECCHERIA,† (him beside thee) off whose trunk
 "Its guileful head the axe of FLORENCE struck.
 "Onward bides SOLDANIERI,‡ with whom
 "Is GANELLONE§ and TRIBALDELLO,|| he
 "Faenza's gates at midnight open'd wide."

* One of the Duera. Buoso, of Cremona, was bribed by GUY DE MONTFORT to allow the enemy to enter a pass between Piedmont and Parma, intrusted to him. This deed caused the extirpation of his family.

† BECCHERIA, Abbot of Vallombrosa, the Pope's legate at Florence. His intrigues in favor of the Ghibellines caused him to be beheaded.

‡ SOLDANIER. A partisan of the Ghibellines, who headed the populace of Florence.

§ GANELLONE. The betrayer of Charlemagne.

|| TRIBALDELLO DE MANFREDI, who was bribed to betray the city of Faenza in 1282.

On quitting these, two frozen in one hole
 Attracted me. The head of ONE was on
 The OTHER, cowl-like, fix'd. The upper WRETCH
 Greedily the nether scull kept gnawing :
 Not TYDÆUS* fiercer MENALIPPUS maul'd.

“ From hatred more than hunger seem thy teeth
 “ Fix'd in that loathsome scull : (addressing him)
 “ Such vengeance why ? For if it justify
 “ A deed so gross, be but this tongue still warm,
 “ It shall on earth thine injuries detail.”

* TYDÆUS. See Statius Theb. book 8.

C A N T O XXXIII.

CONTENTS.

The THIRD CIRCLE continued.

THIS listen'd to, he from the foul repast
His teeth withdrew, then, with his victim's hair,
His soily lips cleansing, spake thus: " I know
" Not who you are, or how you hither came:
" But you are Tuscan doubtless by your tongue.
" You ask a tale so dire, so harrowing,
" That now, before I tell it, all my soul
" Is agony! Oh that my words were seeds
" To raise rank infamy upon the fiend
" Whose scull I glut, and ever blast his fame!

“ The cause that I (Count UGOLINO)* thus

“ This WRETCH (Archbishop RUGGIERI once)

“ Treat vengeful, merciless—you now shall hear.

“ That to his wicked machinations, I

“ Trusting, was prison'd and there died, you know.

“ But how, how cruelly is yet untold !

“ This will I now reveal : then shall ye judge

“ If this my vengeance over-rate his crime.

* Count UGOLINO DE GHERARDESCHI. One of the heads of the Guelf faction at Pisa, in 1288.

Archbishop RUGGIERI DEGLI UBALDINI, of the Ghibelline faction.

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Laufranchi, | } Ghibelline houses. |
| Sismondi, | |
| Gualandi, | |

The Count UGOLINO having united himself with the Archbishop, treacherously obtained the supreme power of Pisa. Sometime after this the Archbishop having quarrelled with the Count, betrayed him to the Pisans, who immured him with his two sons and two grandsons in the tower on the Piazza of the Ariziani (since named Famine) threw the key into the Arno, and starved them to death.

“ In my dark cell (nam’d Famine from my fate :
 “ Where many since have perish’d ; and where still
 “ Will many more) a cranny high was form’d,
 “ Thro’ which light gloomy pierc’d, and scant of air.
 “ When o’er its area many a moon had cross’d,
 “ One night this dream my doubtful slumber trac’d.

“ Over the mountain* that from Pisa screens
 “ Lucca’s fine plains, a prelate chas’d a wolf
 “ And all its whelps. Him the Lanfranchi, and
 “ The Sismondi, and Gualandi follow’d.
 “ Lean were the hounds, and eager sniff’d their prey.
 “ The frightened victims fault’ring in their loins,
 “ Were torn to pieces, wolf and ev’ry whelp.

“ I wak’d. Not yet was morn.—My children (for
 “ They all were prison’d with me) in restless

* Mountain. The mountain of Giuliano, between Pisa and Lucca.

" Slumber call'd to me piteously for bread.—
 " Have you a heart obdurate to repel
 " Anguish for such a scene? If you can grieve
 " At any thing, grieve here.—Awake, they look'd
 " For food.—The usual loaf not yet was sent :—
 " We waited long, hungry. At length against
 " The door was heard a noise. With eager gaze
 " All for its op'ning watch : it open'd not.
 " A noise again was heard—noise horrible !—
 " It was the key that clos'd us ever in !

" I turn'd to view my children's faces. There,
 " Tears fast were streaming. I sat speechless by.
 " Why, father, why thus do you look at us ?
 " My little ANSELM ask'd. I could not speak ;
 " Not even weep. Thus pass'd this day silent,
 " And its long sleepless night. Another came.
 " Soon as the dingy light fell on them, I
 " Saw my countenance on theirs, four dear boys.
 " O how they look'd ! Frantic my hands I champ'd.

“ Up they all started, weak till then as death,
 “ And eager cried, thinking that hunger urg’d
 “ My teeth—‘ seize, seize *me*—take *my* flesh—all, all
 “ Of it is thine :’—but down they sunk again.
 “ To ease them I sat quiet. The remnant
 “ Of that day and all the next, mute were we.
 “ Cruel earth, why did you not swallow us?
 “ The next (it was the fourth) GADDO fell stretch’d
 “ Upon the ground, crying, ‘ Why, father, do
 “ You not help me ?’—and then expir’d. During
 “ The fifth and sixth, my three remaining boys,
 “ One by one—died. Myself, now blind, grop’d that
 “ I might but touch them ; and upon their names,
 “ (They three days dead) wildly, tho’ feebly, call’d.
 “ Then famine did what sorrow had refus’d.”

The Count thus closing, glow’ring look’d : and, as
 A dog his bone, the PRELATE’S scull scranch’d on.

PISA, of beauteous Italy, the black

Reproach : (another Thebes for wickedness,)
 Should, for thy crimes, thy neighbours prove loit'ring
 To punish thee, may, from their rocky seats,
 Capraia's and Gorgona's* isles loos'ning,
 Move onward, and Arno's mouth stop up, till,
 To the last soul, thy citizens be drown'd.
 What ! had the Count thy fortresses betray'd,
 His sons were innocent ! The tender years
 Of those he nam'd to me, BRIGATA's too—
 UGUCCIONE's, ought to have sav'd them !

The TRIBE we next advanc'd upon, supine
 In ice were lock'd. Not on their feet, revers'd
 They stood, so that their tears in lumps roll'd down
 Upon the eye, and clogg'd the rest, until
 One mask of crystal cold prickling and stiff
 From the cheek-bone to their arch'd brow, was form'd.

* Capraia, } Islands near the mouth of the Arno.
 Gorgona, }

When by the frost intense I had began
 To dread all pow'r of feeling gone, a wind
 Against my face blew soft. Surpris'd, I ask'd
 The cause. "Thou soon shalt know it," said MY BARD:

Incrusted hard in ice, a SINNER thus
 Exclaim'd to us: "You, cruel shades, ere you
 " By congelation, straight be in your stand
 " Eternal jamm'd, stop, and from off my eyes
 " Remove these stiff'ning icicles, that tears
 " Awhile once more may have their fluency."

"Wouldst thou that I relieve thee, tell thy name.
 " (I said) If then I fail, be my reward
 " The coldest gulf." "I am ALBERIGO.*
 " Sad on the earth was my selection: fruits
 " Noxious. Thence fruits more noxious here are mine."

* ALBERIGO DE MANFREDI of Faenza, who assassinated at a banquet his brotherhood, collected there to heal a quarrel with him. The signal for the deed was when the fruit was served.

" Ah! ALBERIGO dead!" I cried. " True. (He)
 " But where my body is, or what on earth
 " Its deeds, from me conceal'd. Now that you may
 " More readily the gelid lumps rend from
 " Mine eye-balls, hear this told—to breathing man
 " A mystery! Of PTOLOMEA* this
 " The privilege strange:—that when the soul into
 " Some vice the body has betray'd, this Depth
 " Receives it, tho' on earth the body still
 " Remains: there, by some fell DÆMON possess'd,
 " And dominant, its heinous way it works,
 " To that last hour fated for Atropos
 " To sever them, when hither it is plung'd.
 " That SPIRIT mark behind us. He has lain
 " Long in that congelation solid, wedg'd
 " Immoveable, while on the earth remains

* Ptolomea. This circle, so called from PTOLOMY, the son of
 ABUBUS, by whom SIMON and his two sons were murdered at a
 banquet made for them. See, 1st Maccabees, chap. xvi.

" His body still alive. Descend : himself

" (BRANCA D'ORIA) will the strange tale confirm."

" This is a cheat on my credulity,"

I cried. " For BRANCA D'ORIA* well I know,

" Feeds and sleeps, and ev'ry human function

" Is on earth still exercising." He thus :

" Ere in the lake of heaving pitch immerg'd

" Was MICHEL ZANCHE, this vile SHADE (his soul

" Then here) hous'd in his body upon earth

" A dæmon fell. This too his kinsman's doom,

" The foul compeer in the same trait'rous deed.—

" Now from mine eyes this gelid mask rend off."

But I such court'sy thought it meet to wave.

O Genoese ! a people reprobate !

* BRANCA D'ORIA of Genoa, said to have murdered his father-in-law MICHEL ZANCHE. See Canto XXII.

With not one virtue thy long harden'd
 Wickedness to temper, why from the Earth
 Not extirpated all?—Behold a son*
 Of thine! A sinner than Romana† gave,
 Or ever foster'd, wickeder by far!
 For this now here in Cocytus his soul
 Tormented groans—his body on the Earth
 With its demoniac inmate, sinning still!

* Referring to BRANCA D'ORIA.

† Referring to ALBERIGO.

CANTO XXXIV.

CONTENTS.

The lowest portion of the THIRD CIRCLE, being the centre of Hell, called Ptolomea.

BANNERS were in the distance waving high.
“ Look forward (said MY GUIDE) th’ Infernal King
“ Approaches.” Like a huge mill on ev’ning
Seen obscurely, or in black storm, onward
He strode. Behind MY FRIEND I ran to screen
Myself, for the wind blew, tempestuously,
Most piercing frost. The wretched SHADES were swath’d
In ice, who reeds resembled cas’d in glass.
In ev’ry posture they :—recumbent and
Erect, upon their head or feet, crouching,

With their head downward, or backward thrown
 The face upward. Near to that BEING once
 Beauteous, majestic, me MY GUARDIAN led,
 Saying—"Now gaze on Dis!" O, reader! what
 Of cold unprecedented here I felt,
 Can be imagin'd but when felt the pain
 Ere grows the sense benumb'd; or when again
 By agony acute the sense returns.

This EMPEROR OF WOE, tho' from the chest
 Above the ice but visible, expos'd
 A form stupendous! His arm surpass'd the
 Bulkiest giant's, as bulkiest giant's mine!
 Comeliest of BEINGS this, before he rear'd
 With haughty daring vengeful, his great soul
 To war against his MAKER! How odious,
 To a scaring monster chang'd! For his head,
 (Terrific sight!) express'd three visages!
 The front blaz'd with a deep vermillion: that
 Whose widen'd chin on the left shoulder press'd,

Was sallow : that on the right, dingy as
 The soil, foul refuse of subsiding Nile.
 Two wings he had unfeather'd, like the bat's,
 Filmy ; that when open'd, extended far
 Their sheets ;—no largest vessel's sails so large !
 Thrice should he flap them, thence would rise a wind
 Transmuting Cocytus, tho' fluent then,
 To one vast mass of ice. From his six eyes
 Tears ever stream'd, and bloody mucus from
 His mouths. He ev'ry SINNER seiz'd : and at
 One cranch of his huge teeth, his bones were to
 The least, like flax beneath an engine, mash'd !

THREE by this triple-headed FIEND I saw
 At once tortur'd. “ He (said MY GUARDIAN then)
 “ Whose head is grip'd within the foremost jaws ;
 “ And, flay'd at ev'ry gnaw, the greatest pangs
 “ Endures—JUDAS ISCARIOT is. He from
 “ The dingy muzzle hanging by the legs
 “ Downwards ; and who, tho' tortur'd, utters not—

" Is BRUTUS. The third, like his fellow hung
 " Down revers'd, tense all his muscles—CASSIUS.
 " But night returneth : we must now depart,
 " For all is shewn thee bearing int'rests dire !"

Complying ; I, tight round MY GUARDIAN'S neck
 Clung instantly. He, fit moment chusing,
 And a spot, when mov'd the monster's wing, grasp'd
 Hard his shaggy cov'ring : thence down his side,
 Clotted with ice, he slowly, the labor
 Great, descended. On his projected hip
 Breathless resting awhile—" This (remarked he)
 " A dangerous toil : the sole escape from Hell !"

He now transvers'd himself, as he would leap
 Downwards : myself felt mystically turn'd.
 Upon the verge of a small cranny of
 A rock he lighted : " Now stand thou erect,"
 He said. Erect I stood, when lo ! I saw
 Not Lucifer where, as I deem'd, we left

Him : but looking upward, there was he seen
 Revers'd. But now MY GUIDE : " Our way is long,
 " Rugged, and dangerous : the sun, too, has
 " Three hours on his illustrious circle roll'd."

Alarm'd, bewilder'd, I then thus inquir'd :
 " Where now that region overwhelm'd in ice ?
 " Why thus is Lucifer transpos'd, upwards
 " His heels ? And tho' this moment it was eve,
 " This next, you say, is morn of three hours birth ?"

" He, DEVIL chief, infernal, ever there
 " Is fix'd ; for it is the centre—centre
 " Of Hell, centre of the terrestrial globe
 " Incasing it immeasurably thick,
 " Thy mortal habitation, genial, bland !

" This hemisphere opposes that where stands
 " Mount Calvary, a hallow'd spot, hallow'd
 " By HIM, who suff'ring there, resign'd for all,

" Spotless his life. The place beneath us is
 " Judæa, where it is eve, tho' here morn,
 " And that ARCH-DÆMON, down whose hair-like steps,
 " Descent successfully I hazarded,
 " Will, where we left him, buoyant on nothing,
 " Known to mortal sense, for ever bide.
 " Here from his stand celestial fell he ; when
 " The Earth, as if in dread, from eminence
 " Sunk low, and let the ocean shelter it.
 " This mountain* shot its height, that it might leave
 " This vacancy, shunning the DÆMON's touch."

There is a void immense near LUCIFER'S
 Black region, to the sight not traceable,
 But known by sound of a small tumbling stream,
 That thro' a rock corroding, winded far.
 Thro' this, first by ascent craggy and steep,

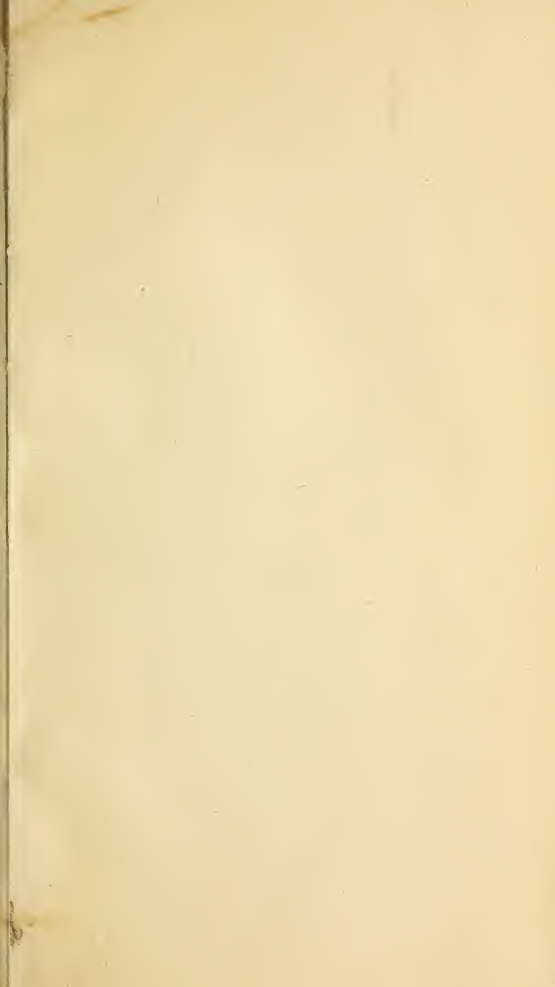
* This mountain. Purgatory.

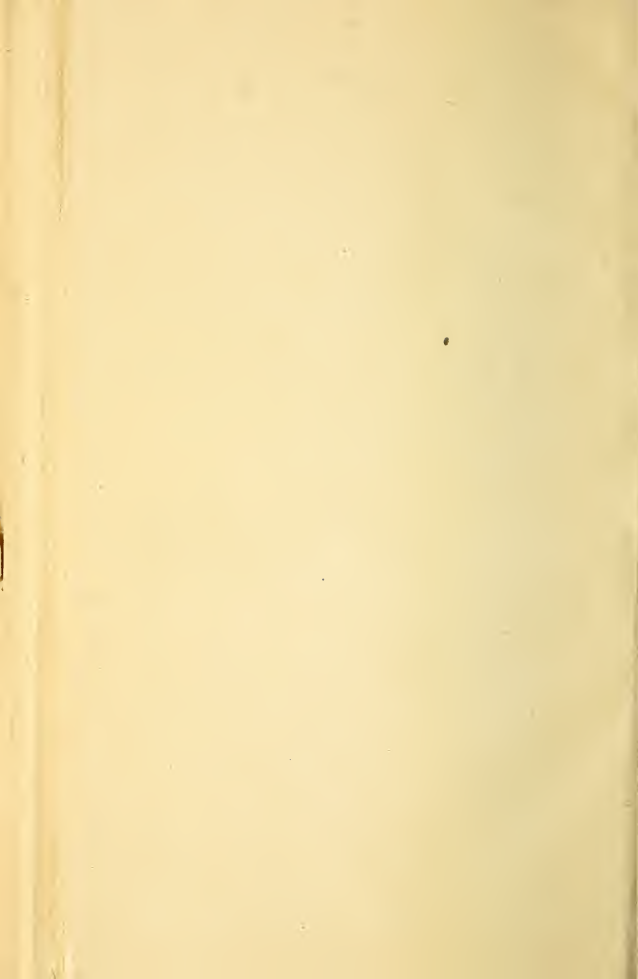
Y GUIDE, I following, his dark way crawl'd ;
 as it were endless, long. Its outlet shew'd
 loft a crater. Thence we beheld once
 fore the firmament of God all starry ;
 and I once more survey'd—His comely World.

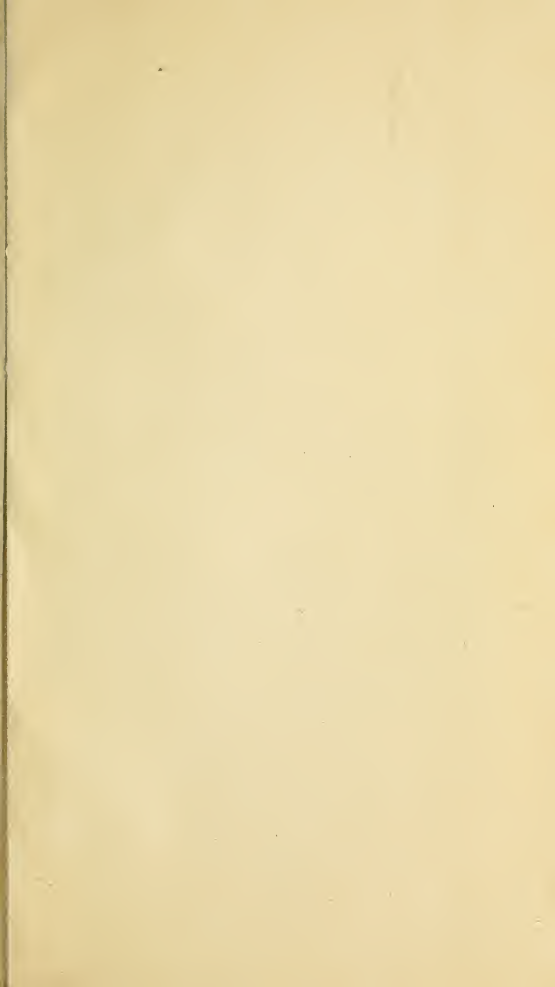
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